

Build Beach Muscle Fast! p.129

THE MAGAZINE MEN LIVE BY

Men's Health

Chris Pratt's Plan

**LOSE
YOUR
BELLY**

**MONSTER
FAT LOSS—
GUARANTEED!**

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**RED-HOT
SUMMER**

**7 WILD TRIPS!
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1 ROASTED PIG!**

*+10 Smokin' Pages of
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**2015
ADVENTURE
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Conquer!*

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Chris Pratt, photographed by Emily Shur. Styling by Sandra Nygaard, grooming by Bridget Brager/Bumble & Bumble/The Wall Group, production by Emily Roth/Productit. Alternative Apparel tank top, Hudson jeans, Panerai watch. Inset: Photograph by Sasha Eisenman.



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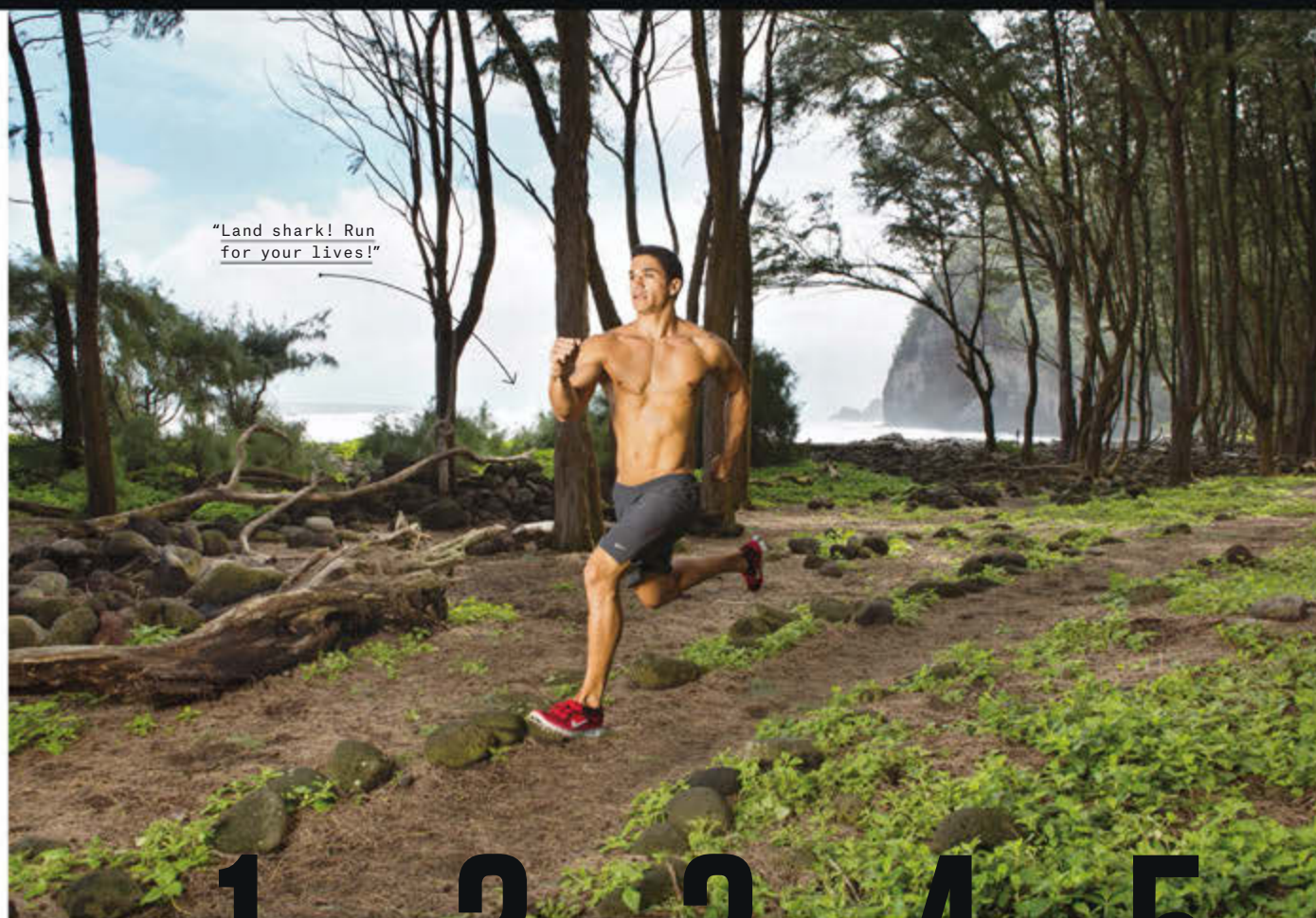


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1 2 3 4 5

LAZY, HAZY DAYS? NO WAY—MAKE THIS SEASON ROCK!

FIT THESE 5 CHALLENGES INTO YOUR SUMMER. THEN BRAG ABOUT IT TO YOUR COUCH-BOUND BUDDIES.

Pick out a fall race and sign up now (that's right, now).

So now you *have* to do it. Go for a run on some of your vacation days—it'll make the beer taste better. On the beach, barefoot is fine for fun. But if you're out there logging serious miles, lace up to avoid foot or calf injuries, advises R. Amadeus Mason, M.D., team physician for USA Track & Field.



Mark the Tour de France with your own serious ride.

Aim for a Tour rider's average speed (27 mph on the flat), and then imagine doing that for 100-plus miles. Track your speed and distance with the free app Strava (iTunes). To test your butt stamina, stay in the saddle for at least 4½ hours, the time it takes the fastest rider to finish a typical stage.



Check out the women's World Cup (final July 5).

You'll be reminded why soccer is called the Beautiful Game. Parlay your enthusiasm into a hot afternoon of fun. Text some guys and gals and meet at a park. Five-on-five soccer on a small field is the perfect balance of effort and fun. Encourage stripping down to sports bras. Bring beer!



Hit the trail in a national park. Then pitch in.

The National Park Service is one year away from its centennial, but the suits in D.C. forgot to bring a gift. Some parks, short on funds and shorthanded, are falling into disrepair. So do something about it: Offer to fix trails or pick up trash. Find out how at nps.gov/gettinginvolved/volunteer.



Take your mate to Magic Mike XXL, opening July 1.

Then discuss. Don't be intimidated by guys like Channing Tatum and Joe Manganiello—put them to work for you. Talking about her turn-ons can ramp up her arousal, making it easier to suggest something new, says relationship expert Gail Saltz, M.D. Now where's that G-string?





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Are You Fit Enough for an Adventure Race?

THE BIG QUESTION

■ LAST OCTOBER I FLEW TO CHICAGO FOR THE *MEN'S HEALTH* URBANATHLON, A 10-MILE obstacle race through downtown. I've attended quite a few Urbs over the years, but I've always run the sprint version of the race. The reason? Anybody can run 3 miles, even me. Plus, I wanted more time to hobnob with *MH* readers, enjoy the food, and sample the free beer.

Yet when I arrived at last year's event, I was struck by one thought: I'm the editor-in-friggin'-chief of this magazine. I *need* to run the whole race! So I decided right then that I would.

Let me be clear: I am not a runner. Basketball is my game. And I'm as comfortable on a soccer field as I am on my couch. But running? In an adventure race, I'd look forward to the obstacles just so I could stop.

I set out pacing our publisher, Ronan Gardiner. (Ronan has run every Urbanathlon since the first one in 2006. That's 19 in all—and yes, he's counting.) After a mile he broke ahead, and the reality of my challenge became clear. Two miles in, I slowed. Halfway, I stalled and walked for a while. Midway through the 1-mile stair climb at Soldier Field, at mile 7, I sat down and enjoyed the view from the upper deck. Spectacular.

Roughly two hours after the starting gun had fired, I crawled under a cab, over a bus, and up an 8-foot wall to cross the finish line. Ronan (below left) had finished 40 minutes ahead of me, but I didn't care. My feet were blistered and my left knee throbbed, but I'd made it. I had finished my first max-suffering, max-reward race. It won't be my last.

Do you have what it takes? Of course you do. If I can do it, so can you. But do me a favor: Prepare a little, okay? Turn to page 124 for our adventure race training plan. In just 35 days, you'll be able to conquer any of them. But which one? Find your answer on page 130.

As for me, I'll be in New York on October 24 and in San Francisco on November 22 for this year's Urbanathlons. Say hi, won't you? I'll be the guy in the middle of the pack—with a big smile on his face.



Bill
Bill Phillips,
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Men's Health carries the very latest health, fitness, and nutrition reporting and taps the world's foremost experts so you can be more knowledgeable about your health. But every body is different. Take what you read here as general information; individual diagnoses and treatments can come only from a health care practitioner.

An aerial, high-angle photograph of the New York City skyline at dusk. The image captures a dense cluster of skyscrapers, with many windows glowing with warm yellow light. The Empire State Building is prominent on the right side, and the Chrysler Building is visible on the left. The city extends to the water's edge, where the Hudson River and the East River are visible, with bridges and boats in the distance. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, suggesting the time is either early morning or late evening. The overall mood is one of resilience and urban energy.

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*"I maintain
the visual integrity
of the magazine.
Loosely translated:
"women in bikinis."*

FAVORITE MH TIP

USE A LIGHT GRIP AND A NARROW
STANCE TO LAUNCH A WIFFLE BALL
OVER YOUR BACKYARD FENCE.
IF YOU'RE NEAR A BEACH,
CHARLOTTE MCKINNEY MIGHT
CATCH IT (P. 140).

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*"My stories this
issue: sex (p. 101),
plus quick-chilled beer
and road trips (p. 139).
But not all together..."*

FAVORITE MH TIP

FLIRT WITH SOMEONE ON
A SUNNY DAY, AND THE NICE
WEATHER INCREASES THE ODDS
THAT SHE'LL GIVE IN TO
YOUR CHARMS. TALK ABOUT
A SUNSHINE LAW!

Ronan Gardiner

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*"This month I'm
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for our advertisers. They
need to focus on being fit
and healthy too!"*

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TAKE A VACATION FROM EMAIL
FOR ONCE. YOU WON'T TRULY
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YOU DO! HEY, IT'S JULY.
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BY K. ALEISHA FETTERS

Your trigeminal nerve sends a “Dilate!” command to your anterior cerebral artery. This results in a warm rush of blood to your frontal lobe, your brain’s decision-making HQ. Your brain perceives this as a signal that it’s being threatened with frost damage.

As you wolf down rocky road, the frozen goodness cools your pie-à-la-mode-hole. This temperature drop stimulates your trigeminal nerve, which runs throughout the roof of your mouth and helps regulate the amount of blood flowing through your brain.

About 20 percent more blood is pumping through your anterior artery to your frontal lobe. The sudden surge causes surrounding tissue to swell, which squishes brain cells against the inside of your skull and activates pain receptors all across your forehead.

As you grimace mid-gorge, the pain signals override the trigeminal nerve's earlier command and instruct your anterior cerebral artery to constrict, restricting bloodflow. Because the extra blood needs 30 seconds to a minute to drain, your pain lingers.

Ah, sweet relief. You dig in again. Oh, you haven't learned your lesson? Trick your trigeminal nerve by pressing the underside of your tongue to the roof of your mouth between bites. This will warm the nerve and tell it to ease up on the overreaction.



VERSACE

EROS

THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR MEN



When You Should Say No to Sex

Men are expected to be horndogs, ready for sex at the drop of a bra. That's a lot of pressure, says Debby Herbenick, Ph.D., director of Indiana University's Center for Sexual Health Promotion. "Sometimes men end up accepting sex because their partner wants it, but they're not that into it," she says. "Then they have difficulty with erections, and it sets them up to feel like they have ED." So the next time her booty call feels more like a duty call, ask: *Do I really want this now?* And if the answer is no, be honest: Tell her you're too tired or stressed, and promise that the sex will be hotter if you two wait a night.

Expert Advice from **Debby Herbenick, Ph.D.**

1

Wet Her Sexual Appetite

"Men think of lube in terms of 'need.' Instead, think 'want.' Studies show people who use lube enjoy more sexual pleasure. Plus, women can take 15 minutes to warm up, and their vaginal walls can be dry even when aroused. I like water-based lubes like Pure Naked, or organic gels from Good Clean Love."

2

Listen Her Panties Off

"Love and emotional intimacy are big predictors of orgasm. You can't make yourself fall in love, but you can make experiences more intimate. At dinner, my partner and I always ask each other about our day, and it's not just idle chitchat. It's good to vent and to know that someone loves you enough to listen."

3

Do Sex and Reps Together

"Need a reason to work out together? I've developed a training program that can increase arousal for two-thirds of women; it's in my book *The Coregasm Workout*. This type of pleasure doesn't come easily. It's only when women's bodies are fatigued—after intense cardio or sets of knee raises."

4

Compliment Her Lips

"Genital self-image is a hot research area. My studies show that women who are comfortable with their vulvas and vaginas have more orgasms and more-positive feelings toward sex. Next time you explore south of her belly button, tell her just how beautiful she is, how great she tastes, and how sexy she feels."

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Ignore the Wake-Up Call

"I train athletes to utilize the time if they wake up restless at 3 a.m. A pitcher, for example, might visualize throwing three innings. You could picture your golf swing, a bike ride, or a series of lifts. Give your mind something to do other than worrying about lack of sleep."



W. Christopher Winter, M.D., medical director, Martha Jefferson Hospital Sleep Medicine Center, Charlottesville, Virginia

Don't Be Patient at the Hospital

When physicians at primary-care offices work in interactive teams, patients with heart disease spend 38 percent less time in the hospital, according to a new study. To find this kind of practice—called a patient-centered medical home—just go to recognition.ncqa.org.



Ted Epperly, M.D., president, Family Medicine Residency of Idaho; past president, American Academy of Family Physicians

Get a Heart-On for Blueberries

The harvest is in, and that's good news for your blood vessels. U.K. research shows that 1/2 to 1 cup can improve endothelial function, a marker of circulatory health. Other trials are testing blueberries' benefits for vision, blood pressure, and neurological function.



Jeffrey Blumberg, Ph.D., F.A.C.N., F.A.S.N., director, Antioxidants Research Lab, USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging, Tufts University

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LIFE'S QUESTIONS, ANSWERED

Are raw diets really worth it?

JEFF, EUGENE, OR

Here's the premise behind putting away your frying pan: When you eat food raw, you consume key nutrients and enzymes that would be destroyed during cooking. The flaw in this logic is that the enzymes won't survive the stomach acids released during digestion anyway, explains Katherine Tallmadge, R.D., a D.C.-based nutritionist. And while heat can decrease the nutritional content of some produce, it can also boost your absorption of antioxidants and vitamins from tomatoes, carrots, and broccoli. Plus, some foods have certain things, like E. coli and salmonella, we *want* cooking to kill. That's why going raw usually means cutting out meat, fish, and dairy. The one upside to the diet? Adherents eliminate processed foods and often lose weight as a result. Of course, you can just adopt that strategy—and still have your steak and eat it too.



I'm in my 30s. Is there any harm in getting a colonoscopy before I'm 50?

JOHN, MIAMI, FL

It's more likely to hurt your wallet than your butt. Serious complications from colonoscopies, including bowel perforations, are rare, occurring in less than 0.3 percent of procedures. No, the biggest pain in the ass will be the cost, which runs anywhere from \$654 to \$1,600, according to research in the journal *Cancer*. And that's *with* insurance coverage. In addition to the actual procedure, you'll also have to pay deductibles on other expenses, like the bowel-loosening prep kit, facility fees, and anesthesia. Now factor in that the average 30- to 39-year-old man's

odds of being diagnosed with colorectal cancer within 10 years are less than 1 in 1,438, and it becomes hard to justify having your large intestine inspected, says Philip Schoenfeld, M.D., a professor of internal medicine at the University of Michigan. But there are exceptions: If a parent or sibling had the disease, you should be scoped at least 10 years before the age of diagnosis in the youngest family member or at age 40, whichever comes sooner. And at any age, get yourself to the doctor if you're experiencing persistent hemorrhoids, unexplained bloody poop, severe abdominal pain, or sudden diarrhea; any of these could be a sign of a serious problem, including colorectal cancer.

What should I look for when buying a chemical-free sunblock?

TONY, WILMINGTON, NC

First, zero in on zinc oxide. This and titanium dioxide are the minerals most commonly used in chemical-free sunscreens, but zinc has the edge in protection, says David Leffell, M.D., a professor of dermatology at Yale School of Medicine. These physical sunscreens work by reflecting UVA and UVB rays away from your body, whereas chemical barriers like oxybenzone, octocrylene, and octinoxate absorb radiation and dissipate it as heat. Which approach is better? Physical sunscreens may be more effective because they don't degrade in sunlight like



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AM I NORMAL?



The sound of other people chewing food or gum really bothers me.

WILL, WEST CHESTER, PA

Listen carefully: That noise annoys plenty of people. Lip smacking, pen clicking, and keyboard tapping also tend to trigger a reaction in folks, although some people are more averse to such noises than others, say UC San Diego researchers. Why? Genetics may play a role, or it could be neurologic cross-wiring, says Melanie Herzfeld, Au.D., an audiologist based in Woodbury, New York. Two regions in your brain work in tandem to process sound: the auditory complex and the amygdala. The latter sends out a distress signal whenever you hear something unpleasant. In your case, the pathways connecting the two regions may be stronger, which could make you more sensitive to the sound of someone chowing down. You can't change your head's wiring, so try outchewing the annoyance. The UC San Diego researchers found that mimicry can be an effective coping strategy; your own munching may be more tolerable to you and cancel out other noises. But if the sound makes you feel anxious or panicked, you could have an extreme sound sensitivity condition, like misophonia. Seek out an ear expert for treatment. Visit audiology.org and click "Find an Audiologist."

☒ NORMAL ☐ WEIRD

Surgery & Rehabilitation Medicine. That's the mental side of the solution. You also need to shore up your core. A lot of men tend to slouch because of weak pecs and abs, two muscle groups that help keep your spine straight, Dr. Hansraj says. To add muscle to your middle, do 25 pushups and a one-minute plank daily. And before bed, do some low-load, long-duration stretching, suggests Roy Film, P.T., D.P.T., O.C.S., a Maryland-based physical therapist. Lie on the floor and place a rolled-up towel under the most rounded part of your midback. Then raise your arms as if you're performing an overhead press. Hold this position for about two minutes and then lower your arms; repeat for a total of 15 to 20 minutes. Film says this will target tight ligaments and fascia along your spine that may be restricting your ability to stand at attention.

My grandpa had Alzheimer's. How can I know for sure that my forgetfulness isn't an early sign of the disease?

BRENDAN, ATLANTA, GA

So you forgot your neighbor's name that one time. If it popped up a few hours later, you probably just had a brain fart. Even a few of these memory lapses shouldn't be taken too seriously, since they're likely to happen when you're stressed, anxious, depressed, or not sleeping enough, says neuroscientist P. Murali Doraiswamy, M.D., MH's brain health advisor. But if forgetfulness begins to affect your daily life—say, you suddenly spaced on how to get to work—see your doctor. The fact that your grandfather had Alzheimer's means your risk could be tripled, says Dr. Doraiswamy. There's

no single test to diagnose the disease, so you'd probably undergo memory and neurological exams, blood tests, and an MRI or a CAT scan to suss out the potential problem. Even if you're given the all-clear, keep beefing up your brain's resiliency, says Dr. Doraiswamy. Walking or jogging just a few times a week can prevent brain atrophy, one hallmark of Alzheimer's, according to a study in *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*.

I want to buy travel insurance for a two-week prepaid trip to Europe. What's my best option?

MIKE, BOSTON, MA

That depends on what type of dream vacation you're planning. If it consists of periods of sightseeing and eating, punctuated with intense relaxation at your nonrefundable hotel, then go with a "comprehensive" policy that includes a "cancel for any reason" option, says Linda Kundell, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Travel Insurance Association (USTIA). This will cover weather-delayed flights, lost baggage, trip cancellations due to illness, and some medical expenses not already covered by your health insurance. Typical cost: about 4 to 8 percent of the price of your trip. But if you plan to partake in riskier stuff, like skiing the Matterhorn, consider adding an "adventure sports" rider. You can select your preferred coverage, whether it's \$10,000 or even \$100,000, for medical emergencies that may require overnight hospital stays or evacuation. Just make sure your specific activity is actually included, says Kundell. To compare your CYAA (cover your ass abroad) choices, visit the USTIA-certified insuremytrip.com.

some chemical kinds can. But we're guessing the main reason you want to avoid oxy and octos is because you've heard they can be toxic. The worry isn't warranted, says Dr. Leffell, who explains that there's no research demonstrating any clear risk in humans. Same goes for the tiny nanoparticles that are used in mineral sunscreens to avoid leaving a white sheen on your skin—even the Environmental Working Group says they're safe. Got all that? Now go get your sunscreen: zinc oxide and SPF 30 or higher, like Elemental Herbs All Good Sport Sunscreen SPF 33 (\$16 for 3 ounces, rodal.com). "Regardless of formulation or brand, what's most important is that you reapply," says Dr. Leffell. Smear it on every two hours or after each swim.

I tend to slouch when I stand. What can I do to improve my posture?

ANDREW, CHICAGO, IL

Keep your chin up. No, really. Every time you catch yourself slouching, imagine a taut string protruding from the top of your head; then picture pulling the string back into vertical alignment with your body, says Kenneth Hansraj, M.D., chief of spine surgery at New York Spine

My girlfriend says it's unhealthy to let my dog lick my face. Is she right?

BOB, THOUSAND OAKS, CA

Let's see: Dog licks your face, and you kiss your girlfriend. Do you think maybe she doesn't want sloppy seconds? But once-removed pooch smooches aside, you should be grossed out too: Canines carry hundreds of different types of bacteria in their mouths, some of which can cause disease in humans, says Jason Stull, V.M.D., M.P.V.M., Ph.D., an assistant professor of veterinary medicine at Ohio State University. Granted, the key word here is "can," since most guys' immune systems are strong enough to fight off these bugs, says Dr. Stull. For people with weaker immune systems, however—including children, pregnant women, and the elderly—the slobbering can be more serious. Worst case, they could contract the bug *Capnocytophaga*, which is found in most healthy dogs and may cause blood and brain infections. You need to enforce a new policy: "No tongue allowed." If you're still getting face baths, find a behavioral specialist—for the dog!—at ccpdt.org.



Food styling (previous page): Matt Von/Healey Resources. Illustration by TOBY LEIGH



WELL ARMED

The LG Watch Urbane, the Genuine Smartpiece. Equipped with Android Wear, it can send texts, deliver notifications, give turn-by-turn directions, sync and play your favorite tracks, and more. With its interchangeable leather straps and classic gold or silver finishes, it proves the future of innovation can indeed be timeless.

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STRAWBERRIES

ROMAINE
& SPRING
MIX



ARTISAN
BLUE
CHEESE



DOES IT WORK?



Cupping Therapy

○ SKIP IT

● WORTH IT (eventually)

The Claim A practitioner applies heated glass cups to your skin, creating suction that causes your blood vessels to dilate. This increases bloodflow to the area and reduces pain.

The Reality As kooky as it may sound, cupping is powerful pain medicine, says *MH* alternative-medicine advisor Benjamin Kligler, M.D., M.P.H. For proof, he points to a 2015 study review in the journal *PLOS One*, which found that after a three-month treatment period, cupping was significantly more effective at reducing lower-back pain than nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and physical therapy. Side effects? Cupping can leave small but harmless circular abrasions that fade after a few days. (People at the beach will think you battled an octopus.) But don't expect one-and-done results, says Dr. Kligler. It can take three or more sessions to see improvement. Another drawback: The treatment isn't covered by insurance, and a 30-minute session can cost \$50 or more. Visit ncaaom.org to find a licensed acupuncturist who can refer you to a cupping practitioner.

Is there any difference among all those contact lens cleaners?

ERIC, SPRINGFIELD, IL

Cross-eyed in the eye-care aisle? We'll break it down. There are basically two types of cleaning solutions: multipurpose and hydrogen peroxide. Multipurpose will remove residue, disinfect, rewet, and rinse, and it's pH-stabilized to keep working for several days. If you're currently using this kind without any issues, look no further. But if you start to experience redness or irritation, make sure you're bathing your lenses in a brand-name solution—generics may contain preservatives that are harmful to sensitive eyes, says *MH* ophthalmology advisor Kimberly Cockerham, M.D., F.A.C.S. Eyes still sore? Buy a hydrogen peroxide solution and the cleaning case specially designed for it. Then watch as the chemical reaction foams

away irritants that the multipurpose stuff misses. One downside: Hydrogen peroxide takes four to six hours to neutralize; if you try to insert your lenses any sooner, your eyes may experience a chemical burn. Also, the solution must be refreshed daily, which is why this kind makes sense only for people with sensitive eyes, says Thomas Steinemann, M.D., a professor of ophthalmology at Case Western Reserve University. Now, if you look in the mirror and continue to see red, we think we know the problem: you. Do you remove your lenses every night? How about replace the case every three months? Time to step it up. A less-than-rigorous routine can lead to keratitis, an inflammation of the cornea that can be caused by bacteria buildup in your lenses and case. And guess what? It's especially common in men.

Is it true there's a medical equivalent of my annual credit report? I don't want that floating around.

TIM, ROCHESTER, NY

Yep. We just checked yours, and it says you're paranoid. The Medical Information Bureau (MIB) "consumer report file" is used only for people who have serious health conditions, so chances are yours doesn't reveal much, explains Janet Trautwein, CEO of the National Association of Health Underwriters. When you apply for life, disability, or long term care insurance, you're required to report whether you have any conditions that could shorten your life, such as diabetes, HIV, or multiple sclerosis. That information is then sent to the MIB, where it's stored for future use. The next time you apply for coverage, the company can view your file to fill in any gaps or check for fraud. For example, if someone is overweight and has hypertension, the company might consult the MIB to see whether the applicant has type 2 diabetes. Having all three of these conditions would mean you need higher-cost coverage than if you had only one or two. But remember: Under the Affordable Care Act, health insurance companies can't reject applicants based on this information. Still curious? Annually, you can request a free copy of your report at www.mib.com/request_your_record.html. But since the MIB stores only the previous seven years of info, if you haven't applied for insurance in that time, you may not have a file.



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Spoiler Alerts for Summer

The warm months are exciting in concept, but pitfalls lurk everywhere. Here are some fair-weather warnings, and a few easy saves. EDITED BY BILL STIEG

REMEMBER...

Sex on the beach is never as good as sex between fresh sheets at a five-star resort.

Medium-rare chicken is not a thing.

Traffic and crowds suck the thrill out of fireworks displays. You can still enjoy them from afar.

Your sharp first-date shirt will develop sweat stains shaped like continents.

Roof-mounted bikes do not fit in garages—or under most historic covered bridges.

Christmas in July is unworthy of support.

When the girls at the bonfire dare you to go skinny-dipping, they are up to something.

Anything larger than a small cone is too much. For a child or you.

Swinging on a rope over a swimming hole is no time for indecision.

You may be forced by a young child into riding a spinning teacup.

Your shades and stony expression don't hide your bikini watching.

And women who undo their tops never roll over in their sleep. Ever.

The farther from home plate, the drunker the fans. Don't talk politics.

You've never cleaned your grill properly.

No, you haven't.

Funnel cakes smell better than they taste, and taste better than they feel in your gut.

The worst place to learn how to fix a flat is at the turnaround of your 50-mile ride.

Music festivals lack indoor plumbing. Skip the jalapeño poppers.

Grabbing a beer with your friends on a lazy Sunday afternoon sounds great—at first.

There's no such thing as grabbing "a" beer.

LIGHTEN UP WITH LINEN

The classic summertime fabric looks and feels easy. It breathes like a screen door, and the natural wrinkles and mottled weave help hide sweat. Pick a slim fit in a pale color, and wear it untucked with crisp pants—medium-wash jeans, say. You'll look and feel great.

Sandra Nygaard, fashion and grooming director at *Men's Health*

KEEP YOUR CLOTHES ON

They'll promise to strip and wade in—if you go in first. Then they will run off with your clothes. This is what happens when women drink beer and conspire.

An anonymous *Men's Health* editor who says this happened to some "friends" of his

MAINTAIN YOUR BALANCE

Ninety seconds of spinning on a platform that's also spinning can make any dad toss his tea cookies. Your inner ear's motion sensors aren't designed for this artificial action, so your brain's sense of orientation is confused. Close your eyes (vision makes nausea worse), and when the ride is over, don't move. Sit there as long as the attendant allows. ("Excuse me, sir, children are waiting...")

Gary Paige, M.D., Ph.D., director, University of Rochester Medical Center Balance Clinic

SCRAPE, BRUSH, AND FLUSH

Your attack on years of greasy crud with a putty knife and wire brush is admirable. But don't forget to clear the gas lines of spiders and their webs, which can restrict the flame or lead to a flashback fire. Detach the hoses and the "venturi tubes" from the burner, and clear them out using pipe cleaners or a bottle brush, followed by blasts of compressed air.

Mike Mills, Grand World Champion pitmaster and author of *Peace, Love and Barbecue*

PREPARE FOR A BLOWOUT

Go to bicycling.com/video to see how to swap out a flat tube. Then practice. Always carry a fresh tube, tire lever, and pump. Carefully run a finger along the tire's interior before fixing; the guilty shard might still be there. No new tube? Tie a knot in the punctured one and pedal home. Beats walking.

Emily Furia, deputy editor, *Bicycling* magazine

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Bulletins

NEWS THAT IMPROVES YOU

JULY/AUGUST 2015

STRIKE
FORCE

ADD MPH TO YOUR HEATER

This throwing concept has legs: **Ball speed relies on lower-body power.** In an Ohio State study, pitchers who threw hardest put more force into the ground. "A stable base helps transfer energy through your hips and up your trunk to your arm," says lead study author Mike McNally, c.s.c.s. Try these drills: For the lunge throw, hurl a baseball from a lunge position, left leg forward (if you're a righty). Push your front leg hard into the floor as you throw, letting your back leg rise in the follow-through. For the overhead slam, assume a lunge position, lift a medicine ball overhead, and slam it into the floor, driving your front foot down and straightening your front leg.



BLAST FAT IN 3, 2, 1...

Leave it all at the finish line: **You only have to run a 5K a week to burn fat**, report Danish researchers. Runners who logged at least 3.1 miles a week lost an average of 4 pounds after a year—that's without any diet changes. Those who also cut back on soda, snacks, and junk food shed 12 pounds. The key to success? The will to lose weight, says study author Rasmus Nielsen, Ph.D. Those who took up running specifically to drop pounds experienced the best results.

WEIRD SCIENCE THAT WORKS



The Finding Refrigerating rice can save you calories. Scientists in Sri Lanka say when rice is cooked with coconut oil and cooled, its concentration of resistant starch rises more than tenfold. This carb isn't easily broken down, so more of it could mean fewer calories—up to 60 percent fewer, preliminary research suggests.

Apply It Use package directions to cook rice, adding 1 tsp coconut oil per ½ cup of uncooked rice. For the full benefit, let it simmer for 40 minutes and cool 12 hours. Reheat and serve.

433

Extra calories men consume on days they drink alcohol
Source: *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*

Bulletins/Weight Loss



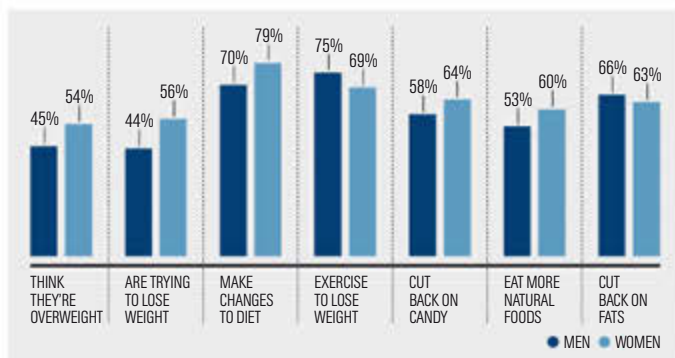
Melt Away 11 Pounds

Cut your gut without giving up the good stuff: **Even a modified Mediterranean diet can encourage weight loss**, say scientists in Germany. People who replaced the diet's standard olive oil with canola and walnut oil and ate two sweets a day lost an average of 11 pounds in 12 weeks, while folks on the traditional diet dropped less than a pound. More options and room for indulgence may help you avoid cravings and make a diet easier to stick to.



WHO CARRIES MORE WEIGHT?

Women use a more balanced attack in the battle of the bulge than men do. A Nielsen survey reveals that women not only exercise but also make more dietary changes. Most men hit the gym but appear to have missed the memo on the importance of healthy eating.



*thank you
personal best
day of our lives*



thank you running

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Don't toss the beet tops. They're great sautéed with onions and garlic.

Beet Down Blood Pressure

Start rooting out hypertension. **The naturally occurring nitrates in beets may help fight high blood pressure**, say British researchers. People with hypertension who drank about a cup of beet juice with nitrates daily for a month saw their BP drop noticeably compared with that of people who drank beet juice without them. Plus, their endothelial function—the ability of blood vessels to expand and contract—improved by about 20 percent. Nitrates convert into nitric oxide when digested, lowering blood pressure within a few hours, the scientists say. No need to swig: Eat one or two beets a day to produce similar benefits.



DON'T SLEEP WITH THE FISHES—EAT THEM

Give your diet a sea change. A Chinese study suggests that **consuming fish may help protect you from liver cancer**. People who ate the most fish had an 18 percent lower risk of liver cancer than those who ate the least. The omega-3s may help stop your immune system from flaring up, reducing cancer-causing inflammation. For every serving of fish you eat per week, you may net a 6 percent decrease in your liver cancer risk.

Bulletins/Nutrition

WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?



Term Organosulfur compounds

What They Do Stave off stomach cancer

How to Eat More

Choose foods in the allium family, such as onions, garlic, leeks, or shallots. People who ate about two onions a week had a 41 percent reduction in their stomach cancer risk, an Italian study found. Slice a few onions and cook them with a bit of oil on medium low, stirring frequently, until caramelized, 30 to 45 minutes. Then use them to top sweet potatoes, steak, or pizza. Or stir them into sour cream for French onion dip.

PLAY SPIN THE JUICE BOTTLE

Time to reevaluate those liquid assets. In a recent Dutch study, scientists tested eight varieties of store-bought bottled juices to find out which ones contained the most antioxidant phenolic compounds per liter. Choose juices toward the top of this chart.

JUICE	PHENOLICS (mg)
ELDERBERRY	3,521
POMEGRANATE	2,684*
BLUEBERRY	1,524
BEET	1,243
APPLE-BERRY	1,029
CRANBERRY	882*
ORANGE	470
APPLE	400

*These bottled juices contained 50 percent water.

E

Number of cups of coffee you should drink daily to optimize the java's artery-friendly benefits
Source: *Heart*

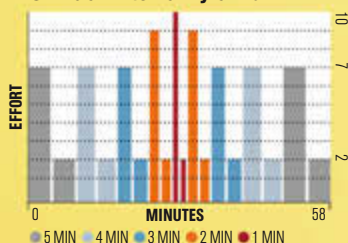
PICK UP A FRIEND WITH BENEFITS.*

*NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS



#GetFresh in the freezer aisle.
Take home the hottest thing in fresh-frozen cuisine. luvoinc.com/wheretobuy

Climb an Interval Pyramid



2/ FORGE FITNESS

Build your lungs with high-intensity kettlebell swings: 30 seconds on, 30 seconds off for 4 minutes, 3 days a week, Wilson says. On the trail, try interval pyramids, courtesy of Sarah Kaufmann of Plan 7 in Salt Lake City:

- ▶ Warm up, then go 5 minutes at effort level 7, with 5 minutes recovery (level 2); repeat for 4 minutes, then 3. Now do 2 minutes at nearly max effort (level 9) with 2 minutes recovery; then 1 at max (10) and 1 at recovery. "Descend" as shown in the pyramid above.

4/ GET SIDEWAYS

Practice is paramount, but skill also comes from being able to hold your body in the correct positions while riding. "You need mobility to do that," Wilson says. His favorite drill is the windmill stick stretch, which puts you in the same position as when you're cornering.

- ▶ Grab a broom or dowel and hold it behind your neck with both hands. Push your butt back and move your right foot forward. Now bend forward and touch your right elbow to the right side of your right knee. Hold for five deep breaths; repeat on your left side. Do this stretch once a day.

857

Calories burned by the average guy mountain biking vigorously uphill for 45 minutes
Source: Compendium of Physical Activities

1/ DON'T GO PRO

To build confidence, revert to flat pedals. Most new riders want to graduate from flat to clipless pedals too soon, Wilson says. "But then they're afraid to take risks because they're locked in."

- ▶ Use flat pedals on tricky trails to give yourself a safety net. "Even an Olympian hopeful I train says flat pedals help his mojo and riding," says Wilson.

3/ GRIP GENTLY

In the U.K. study, riders whose grip stayed strong the longest tended to finish fastest. "Good riders switch between a relaxed and a tight grip," says Wilson.

- ▶ Do more kettlebell swings. "The way you grip the bell mimics the tight-then-relaxed grip you use on the handlebar," says Wilson. Do 10 swings; rest 20 seconds. Do this 5 to 10 times, 3 days a week.

Crank More, Crash Less

You might think fearlessness alone is key to bombing downhill with ease. But researchers in the U.K. say **mountain biking performance depends on a combination of self-confidence and skill, as well as hand-grip endurance and aerobic capacity.** James Wilson, one of America's top mountain biking trainers, explains how you can develop those attributes and tackle any trail.

THE [WORLD] IS MY GYM.

9g
PROTEIN

8g*
FIBER



GOLEAN IS MY FUEL.

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*5g Fat per serving



SEARCH AND DESTROY
He googled "Do robots have souls?"

Bulletins / Brain



DRIVE AWAY STROKES

More reason to be a man with a plan: **Having a sense of purpose in life can lower your risk of brain tissue damage**, reports a recent study in the journal *Stroke*. Researchers found that people who felt their lives had meaning were roughly half as likely to have suffered macroscopic infarcts—small areas of dead brain tissue caused by blocked bloodflow. Study author Patricia Boyle, Ph.D., suggests that the positive effects of taking up a hobby or volunteering can act as a buffer against age-related brain conditions.



SMELL LIKE SUCCESS

Need a loan? Spritz on the right scent: **The smell of lavender can make you seem trustworthy**, say researchers in the Netherlands. People gave more money to others when the room smelled like lavender than when they got a whiff of peppermint or nothing at all. That's because the scent is soothing; plus, your olfactory nerve is connected to the brain region that controls the way you trust others. To improve the odds that you'll shake on the deal, apply Dr. Bronner's lavender hand sanitizing spray (\$5.50, rodales.com).

Don't Short-Circuit Your Brain

Think before you google: **Relying too heavily on search engines could mess with your mind.** In a Canadian study, people who spent 20 minutes or more per day looking up information on their smartphones performed up to 19 percent worse on cognitive tests than those who used their devices less. Study author Nathaniel Barr, Ph.D., says offloading tasks from your brain instead of solving a problem on your own may make you think less creatively and analytically. Check your mental agility: A bat and a ball cost \$1.10 total. The bat costs a dollar more than the ball. How much does the ball cost? (Hint: It's not 10 cents.) Answer: five.



The Youth Serum Eating a serving or two of leafy greens every day may slow your rate of cognitive decline to that of someone 11 years younger, according to new research from Chicago's Rush University.

How to Take It Pile your plate with spinach, kale, and collard greens. They contain folate, beta-carotene, vitamin K, and lutein, the nutrients likely responsible for the brain protection, says study author Martha Clare Morris, Sc.D.

60

Nap duration (in minutes) that can preserve your memory five times better than if you hadn't napped at all
Source: *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*

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ASICS GT-2000 3.

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Go Big, Grow Big

You know that heavy lifting leads to faster gains. Now science explains why: **Lifting to failure with a heavy weight activates 53 percent more muscle fibers** than doing so with a light one, a study in the *European Journal of Applied Physiology* reveals. But don't abandon light loads entirely. "While most of your sets should be in the 6- to 10-rep range, doing occasional 20- to 30-rep sets will ensure that you hit both fast- and slow-twitch muscle fibers, maximizing your overall growth," says lead study author Brad Schoenfeld, Ph.D.

STRENGTH SECRET



POWER BY DIVISION

If your goal is to jump higher, throw harder, or sprint faster, **don't mix power and strength training**, say researchers in Greece. Their study found that men who did separate power workouts gained more explosiveness—a key element of athleticism—than men who folded power exercises into their strength sessions. The scientists' advice: Once or twice a week, do 3 sets of 8 explosive reps of the barbell squat, bench press, jump squat, and broad jump. For the first two moves, use 30 percent of your 1-rep max.



MAKE SOME WAVES

This is easy to grasp: Battling ropes exercises can make your metabolism skyrocket, according to a new study from the University of Minnesota. Researchers found that **using battling ropes for just 10 minutes can burn about 150 calories**, putting it on a par with other popular metabolic training tools, such as kettlebells. Cap off your next workout with this drill from study author Charles Fountaine, Ph.D. Grab an end of the rope in each hand and begin making up-and-down waves. Go for 15 seconds and rest for 45 seconds. Do this 10 times total.

30%

Reduction in lifters' quad activation when squatting with knee wraps versus without
Source: *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*



RULE REVERSAL

Old Rule Doing low-intensity "filler" exercises between sets of other lifts—jumping rope during rest periods for the bench press, for example—can accelerate your gains without compromising your performance.
New Rule Take a load off. Sitting for two to five minutes between sets may help you recover faster and more completely, allowing you to put more effort into each rep, say scientists at the University of Utah.



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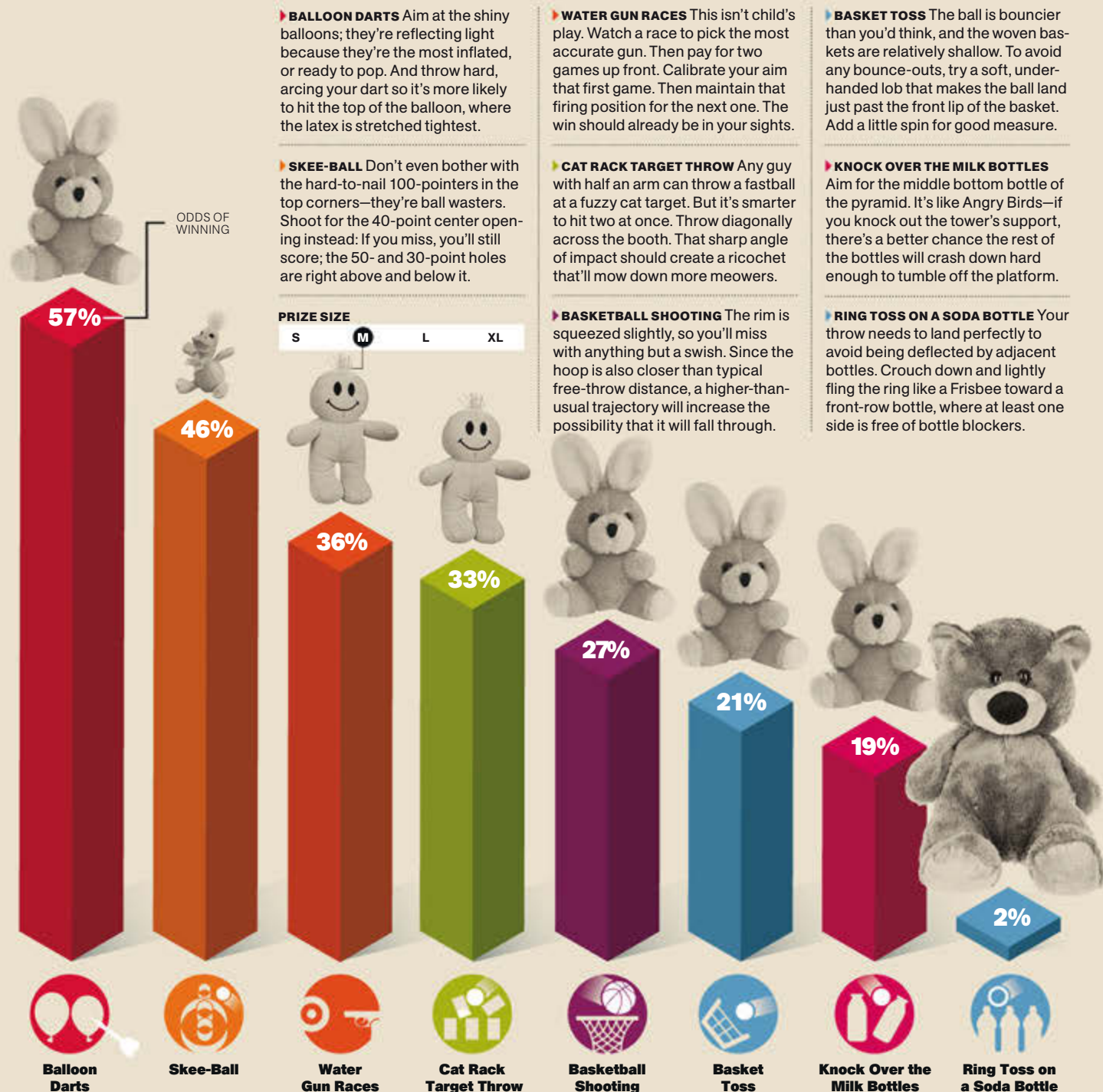
MADE FROM COFFEE BEANS

Step Right Up and Conquer Carnival Games

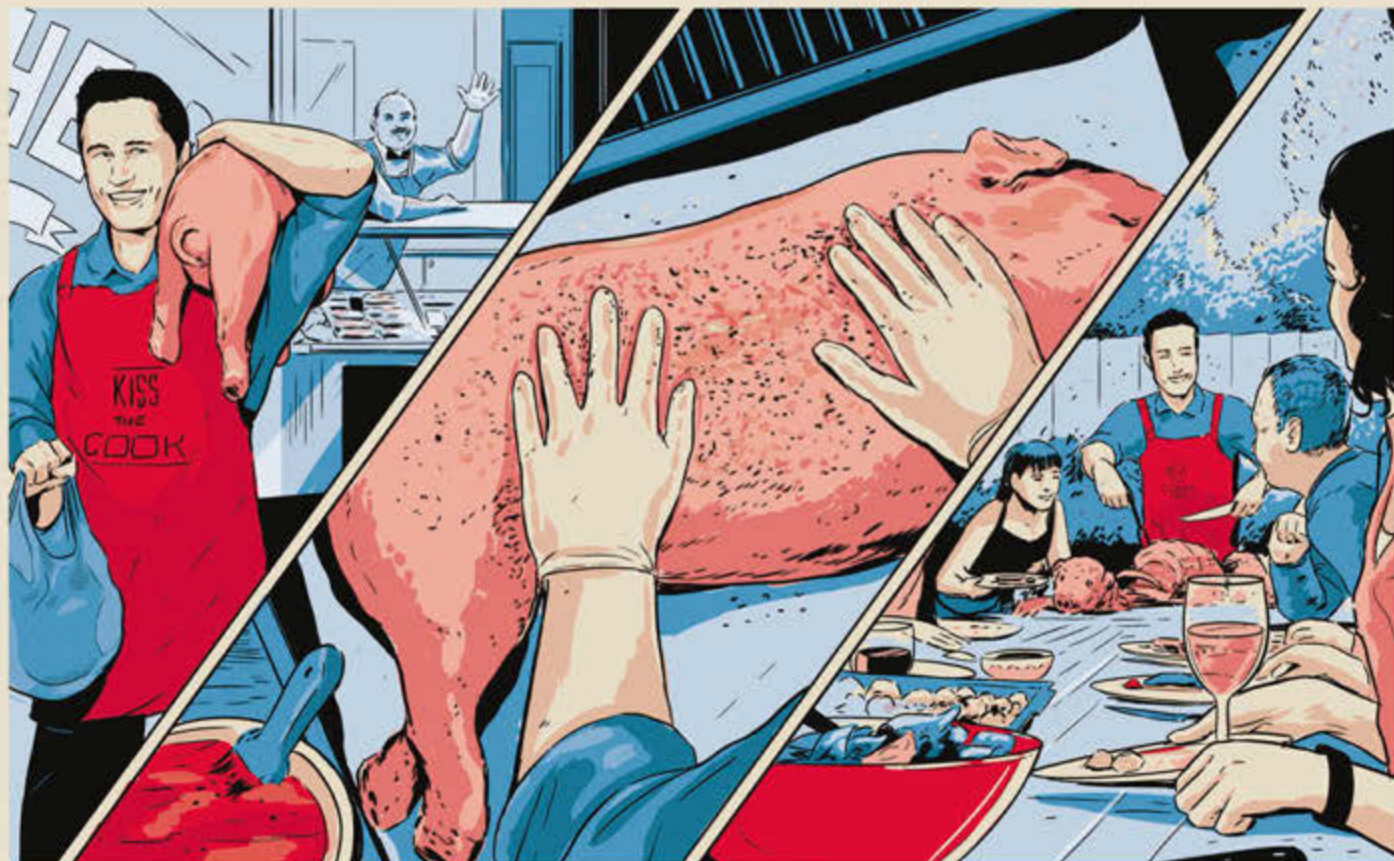
No doubt you can win the giant panda. But how much dough do you want to blow on something that cost about 50 cents to make? The minds behind these games have set them up so you'll pay big for that damn bear. We asked game-booth managers at some of the country's busiest state fairs, boardwalks, and carnivals just how lousy your odds really are (below). Shift them back in your favor with tips from Sal Piacente, host of the Travel Channel's *Game On, America*. Soon you'll be plush with victory. —LAUREN DEL TURCO

Uncommon Knowledge

THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO EVERYTHING



No hog hoedown is complete until you've "pork slapped" your guests. We're talking about serving chilled cans of Porkslap, a laid-back APA with 4.8% ABV. Jimmy Carbone, owner of Jimmy's No. 43 Craft Beer & Kitchen in New York, says this porcine pairing should squeal the deal.



WEEKEND PROJECT

Invite a Pig to Dinner

There are lots of bad ways to roast a pig: Make your own pit from cinder blocks! Truss and spin Wilbur over an open flame! Except these methods involve almost as much prep time as they do cook time. Pig out with less effort using this approach by Mashama Bailey, executive chef of The Grey in Savannah. —PAUL KITA

Herd Your Supplies

First, make sure you have a grill that can handle the hog—that is, an extra-large cooker with at least

18"×30" of grate estate. You can even rent one at a party supply store. Go with propane to maintain a steady temp. Next, call a butcher and ask for a gutted 20-pound suckling pig. It's a special order, so call a week ahead. Also grab thick rubber gloves, a box of heavy-duty aluminum foil, and a full tank of fuel.

Prep the Piggy

Preheat your grill to a steady 375°F. Place Porky on an extra-large baking sheet and rub olive oil over the skin and inside the carcass. Season the swine liberally on both sides with salt and pepper. Using the tip of a sharp knife, cut a small incision in the skin and tuck in a peeled garlic clove. Repeat this process until the entire bulb of garlic is gone.

Heat Up the Hog

Line the hot grill with a layer of foil. Put on your gloves, hoist the pig directly onto the grill, and close the lid. Every 15 minutes, open the cooker and, using your gloves, rotate the meat 45 degrees to ensure even cooking. When the skin has crisped and charred, about 60 to 90 minutes, put on your gloves, flip the pig over, and repeat the process. If any vistles start to burn, wrap them in foil.

Create Your Grub Seasoning

Expect 2 to 3 hours of cooking time. Meanwhile, retrieve a large bowl and mix up a rub from ingredients you probably have on hand: a 2-pound bag of dark brown sugar; ½ cup kosher salt; 2 Tbsp each of

paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, and ground allspice; and 1 Tbsp each of ground cayenne, freshly ground black pepper, and ground mustard. Apply this spicy sweetness to the meat after you carve.

Butcher the Beast

You're done when the skin is crispy and the flesh is tender. (Insert your meat thermometer into the thickest part of the shoulder and leg; it should read at least 165°F.) Slide a large baking sheet under the pig and lift the beast from the grill to a nearby table lined with foil. Let it rest at least 30 minutes. Then chop everything into quarter-inch bits, and knead in the spice blend. Toss it into dinner rolls with pickles and BBQ sauce for swine dining!



THE ROAD HOG

Try a Movable Feast

Want to throw a party in a park or at the beach? You can make your pork cookout more portable

with a La Caja China roasting box. Think of this device as an aluminum-lined wheelbarrow with a lid. You pop in whatever meats or vegetables you

want; then you load up the lid with charcoal and light it. The coals create a hot box that helps even tough cuts like pork butt and brisket simmer until

they're supertender. Models start at \$300—that's about the same as you'd pay for a standard smoker. (See lacajachina.com.)

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UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM

When to Call a Timeout

by Jim Rome

STOP THE PLAY

As host of the longest-running syndicated sports talk show on the radio, I've made a career out of critiquing bad calls across almost every sport. Take the Seahawks trying to throw a touchdown from the 1-yard line in Super Bowl XLIX: That crappy idea might have been avoided if they'd taken a second to think. A smart timeout can be the difference between a touchdown and a turnover. The same goes for kids; only with them, you're trying to curb unsportsmanlike conduct. Trust me, I know. I have two boys, and I use strategic timeouts whenever they act like spoiled superstars. Follow these rules to train your kids for the toughest competitive arena there is—life.

1

Flag Big Problems

In the NFL, you get three timeouts per half. Coaches can't use them frivolously. Follow their lead with your kid. If he keeps stripping the ball from other kids, remind him to share and let him play on. If he doesn't listen, it's time to sideline him. Make the T.O.'s duration depend on his attitude: No griping for at least 10 seconds before you let him back into the action. That teaches self-control, something even the multi-millionaires I talk about sometimes lack.

2

Assess the Penalty

I may rant on the airwaves, but believe it or not, I don't get loud with my wife and kids. Players respect a coach who stays calm. Kids are the same—if you turn up the volume, they'll shut down. Just use the same number of words as number of years old your child is. If LeBron Junior is 2 and booted his sister, it's "Timeout: Kicking." If he's 6, add: "We don't hurt people." At 16? "A house party? I'm taking away the car. Call it a timeout from your prized possession."

3

Spark a Comeback

Once your kid has chilled and is ready to return to the game, resist the urge to give a pep talk. This type of discipline hinges on him deciding on his own that behaving badly isn't worth it. If timeouts aren't working, consider finding him a new league of friends. After all, kids are who they roll with. Your lessons may not stick if he's hanging with a mini Belichick.

—WITH HELP FROM CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST EDWARD CHRISTOPHERSEN, PH.D., ABPP, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI AT KANSAS CITY

Your playbook has a catch: Timeouts work only if the "time in" feels too fun to miss.



GUY MATH



How Much Ice for Your Frosty Fountain Drink?

BY MARK ROBER, A FORMER NASA ENGINEER WHO HOSTS A SCIENCE AND CREATIVITY CHANNEL ON YOUTUBE

You're on a long road trip—or maybe your commute just feels that way—so you pull over to grab a fountain drink from a quickie mart. Now you face a carbonated conundrum: Add too much

ice to the cup, and you'll short yourself soda. Add too little, and you'll be left with a tepid travel drink.

Calculating the optimal amount of ice depends on how long you want your enjoy-

ment to last. Plug that number (in minutes) into the equation at left to find out what percentage of your cup to fill with cubes. (This formula will keep the beverage around 45°F. That's just a bit colder than the refreshment-ready temp of Coca-Cola's "chill-activated" cans.)

Too rushed for parking lot computations? See our chart at right. If you're going to guzzle your Dr Pep-

DRINK TIME (minutes)	ICE FILL (percentage)
<20	0
30	5
45	12.5
60	20
90	35

per, skip the ice completely. The initial pour should come out at around 32°—that's chill enough to chug.

Started my Camry.
Rescued a dog.
Searched for the owners.
Uncovered a plot.
Escaped with the evidence.
Took a leap of faith.
Left them all behind.
Kept the dog.

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Let's
Go
Places

COCKTAIL COMMENTARY



"What do Major League Baseball pitching greats Sandy Koufax, Randy Johnson, and Nolan Ryan all have in common? Great asses."

—ASSOCIATE EDITOR MICHAEL EASTER ON HOW GLUTES BOOST ATHLETIC PROWESS. LEARN MORE: MENSHEALTH.COM/GLUTES

MONTHLY METRICS



Paint Pimps
53% of women say the men they dig drive black cars. Sound superficial? Sure, but August is the time to strike a deal on last year's models. Just sayin'.



Scoops Sell
90% of Americans eat ice cream often. To ensure it tastes great, always pull from the back of the freezer case; you'll avoid flavor-killing ice crystals.



Batters Battle
70% of home-run derbies over the past 10 years have been won by an American League player. This year's amazing slugfest happens July 13.



Corn Crunches
42% of U.S. corn is for livestock. But you'll still look piggy with corn-on-the-cob kernels in your teeth. Make toothpicks a BBQ side.

Sources: Insure.com, TrueCar, California Milk Advisory Board, International Dairy Foods Association, MLB.com, Iowa State University

Let the other fishermen work their worms. Instead, serve a hunk of uncooked hot dog, says Rob Southwick, president of fishing-trend tracker Southwick Associations. Nearly everything under water seems to share our fondness for this mystery meat, and the texture keeps it from sliding off the hook.



BUY Q

Reel Deal: Hook into a Perfect Rod

Most tales about the one that got away give the fish too much credit. The truth is, you may have been ill-equipped to handle it in the first place. An ideal rod and spinning reel have the backbone to land a lunker and make a tug-of-war with a guppy feel exciting. Keep these factors in mind as you upgrade your gear to topnotch tackle. We bet the fish are already quaking in their scales. —WILL SNYDER

Action and Power

"Action" is a term for rod flexibility, which can be slow, medium, or fast, says Todd Kuhn, a NASA scientist and former pro tour angler. A slow pole can bend far enough for the tip to arch all the way down to the base. But because there's so much play, it can be hard to cast well. By contrast, a fast rod will flex only at the tip, which can make wiggling a lure in the water more difficult. So choose medium

action; you'll cast like a master and move your lure like fish food. Another metric, called "power," ranges from light to heavy and refers to how much torque it takes to set a hook. Go medium here too, Kuhn advises. You can use heavier lures and still set the hook with a flick of your wrist.

Guides

Line guides, or "eyes," are the rings that help channel the monofilament from your reel to the tip of the rod. They can be made from a variety of materials, including ceramic, silicon carbide, and nickel titanium alloy. But buy titanium: It has the smoothest surface, and less friction means a longer cast, says Jerry Gibbs, former fishing editor of *Outdoor Life*. The other advantage of titanium guides is that they're strong enough to resist breaking or bending when a whopper puts its full flipping weight on the line.

Shaft and Handle

The strongest, most durable shafts are either graphite or fiberglass. If anglers have a gripe with graphite, it's that the material is too sensitive—you'll feel every little nibble, prompting you to try to set the hook before the fish has completely swallowed it, says

Gibbs. So go with fiberglass—it's less sensitive due to its natural vibration-dampening qualities. Add a cork handle, which is more sensitive than the EVA foam alternative, and you'll get that perfect fish-sensing feel. But beware: Some cork handles are composite blends; the added filler will deteriorate over time, leaving you with an uneven, uncomfortable grip. Crappy cork has holes, color variations, or differing textures.

Reel

Sellers would love you to believe that reel quality begins and ends with the number of ball bearings inside. Don't take the bait. The smoothness of your spin, Kuhn explains, is dictated more by the machining of the drive gears. Simply put, a great reel has tight tolerances: It'll spin with the same fluidity regardless of how fast you're cranking. Test it yourself at the store: Avoid anything that stutters as you shift the speed of your retrieve, sort of like a car bucking and stalling after a gear shift. While you're at it, flip the bail as if to cast; when you turn the handle, it should snap swiftly back into place. Oh, and fishing's rough on a reel, so plastic parts can't hack it. Make sure major components are metal or an alloy.

From top: Erik Isakson/Getty Images, TAO Images Limited/Alamy, Twenty20/Twenty20/Corbis, Blake Little/Getty Images, Paulette King/Getty Images

Tell your pal that, no, middle finger does not beat rock, paper, or scissors.



GUY WISDOM

Jimmy the Bartender

Straight-up advice on women, work, and other stuff that screws up men's lives.

Settle a bet for me, Jimmy: What's the cheapest way to get drunk at a bar?

SCOTT, AUSTIN, TX

You can smuggle in a flask. You can slam back a few crappy well shots. You can drink on a shared tab and then pretend you forgot your wallet when it's time to settle up. But if you're looking to save a buck, do me a favor: Buy some bottom-shelf booze and drink it at home. Drunk guys are always the most obnoxious people at the bar. You really want to spend less? Then drink less. I prefer customers who just want to sip a couple of good drinks to lubricate the conversation. Stop by my place when you're ready for that.

Someone swiped my iPad at work. I think it was the intern, but how do I find out for sure?

ROBERT, TRENTON, NJ

You don't. Maybe it was the intern; maybe it wasn't. Whoever it was isn't going to fess up just because you start playing detective. You left something expensive lying around,

and now you've paid to learn you can't trust your coworkers. Consider yourself lucky that it wasn't something bigger. You start snooping, you risk accusing an innocent person. From now on, do a better job of clearing your desk at night.

Now that my best friend broke up with his girl, he's always wanting to "grab drinks and talk." It's wearing me out, Jim! What's my move?

PHIL, ST. LOUIS, MO

Nobody knows sad sacks like I do. They're here every night, trying to figure out where it all blew up. But you don't work behind a bar, do ya, Phil? You have other places to be. Look, you're a good pal for listening to your friend. Don't abandon the guy, but you gotta draw the line. Tell him you've been groggy at work so you have to catch up on sleep. Hell, you're doing the guy a favor. He can't rely on you forever. And if he needs an ear to bend on the nights you're not free, well, that's what bartenders are for. Send him my way.

A cousin I haven't seen in years keeps tagging me on Facebook in embarrassing photos from my childhood. How do I make her stop?

AARON, ST. PAUL, MN

Isn't there a switch or something that blocks people from seeing the pics? My nephew fixed that for me years ago when I—yeah, me—was on the Facebook. But your question reminds me of a great boss I had once at a warehouse. He kept loading me with work, but I didn't mind because he always asked nice and with respect. Like, "Jim, great work with that section—can you do the same thing over here?" If you send a nasty email telling your cousin to knock off her crap, then you're a dick. But if you butter her up beforehand—"Great photos! It's awesome that you held on to those!"—then you'll probably get what you want.

My girlfriend's brother wants to crash on our couch for a month this summer. A month! She's giving me veto power, but I feel like it's a trap.

LARRY, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

It's a trap all right. Maybe she's not setting it intentionally, but there it is—your chance to show that you're truly committed to family. If you like this woman, you'll make it work. Just set some ground rules: He can't turn your living room into a bedroom or hog the couch while you're watching TV. In a month he'll be gone, but a few years from now, when you're happily married, your generosity will still be paying dividends.

I've been seeing this woman for a few months now, and our dates are a blast. But the only time we get together is when I reach out. What gives?

JAMAL, BALTIMORE, MD

My buddy Rick is like this. He's a great pal but only when I ring him up. I'm sure your girl is prettier than Rick, but in this way they're the same: They never give, and probably never will. I can accept it from Rick, but ask yourself, shouldn't you expect more from a girlfriend?

WHAT'S YOUR PLAY?

ROCK, PAPER, OR SCISSORS?

Your buddy owes you a beer; he disagrees. Better put up your fists and settle this like men. That's right—it's a Rock Paper Scissors challenge. Go best-of-three with these tips from Douglas Walker, coauthor of *The Official Rock Paper Scissors Strategy Guide*, and the next one will always be on him.

Step 1/ Start with Paper

Your pal is likely going to throw rock. "Men will almost always start with rock," says Walker, who's analyzed thousands of World RPS Society matches to chart this trend. He theorizes men go "rock" to act aggressive. The closed fist certainly *looks* like our most manly move.

Step 2/ Go with Scissors

If you won with paper, move on to scissors. Novices tend to cycle throws in a predictable pattern when they lose: rock to paper, paper to scissors, scissors to rock. Why? Because they often play whatever move just beat them. Put out what trumps your last throw, act astonished, and enjoy your free round.

Step 3/ Call an Audible

What, you lost a throw? Maybe he got lucky. Besides, as every good hustler knows, you have to lose a little to win. Rebound by remembering that players often repeat winning throws because they don't think you'll expect it. Guess what? You're expecting it. Go with whatever beats your buddy's last play. —AMBER BRENZA



crack
life
open.



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SHOULDN'T
BE ONE
OF THEM.**

Show your body some love
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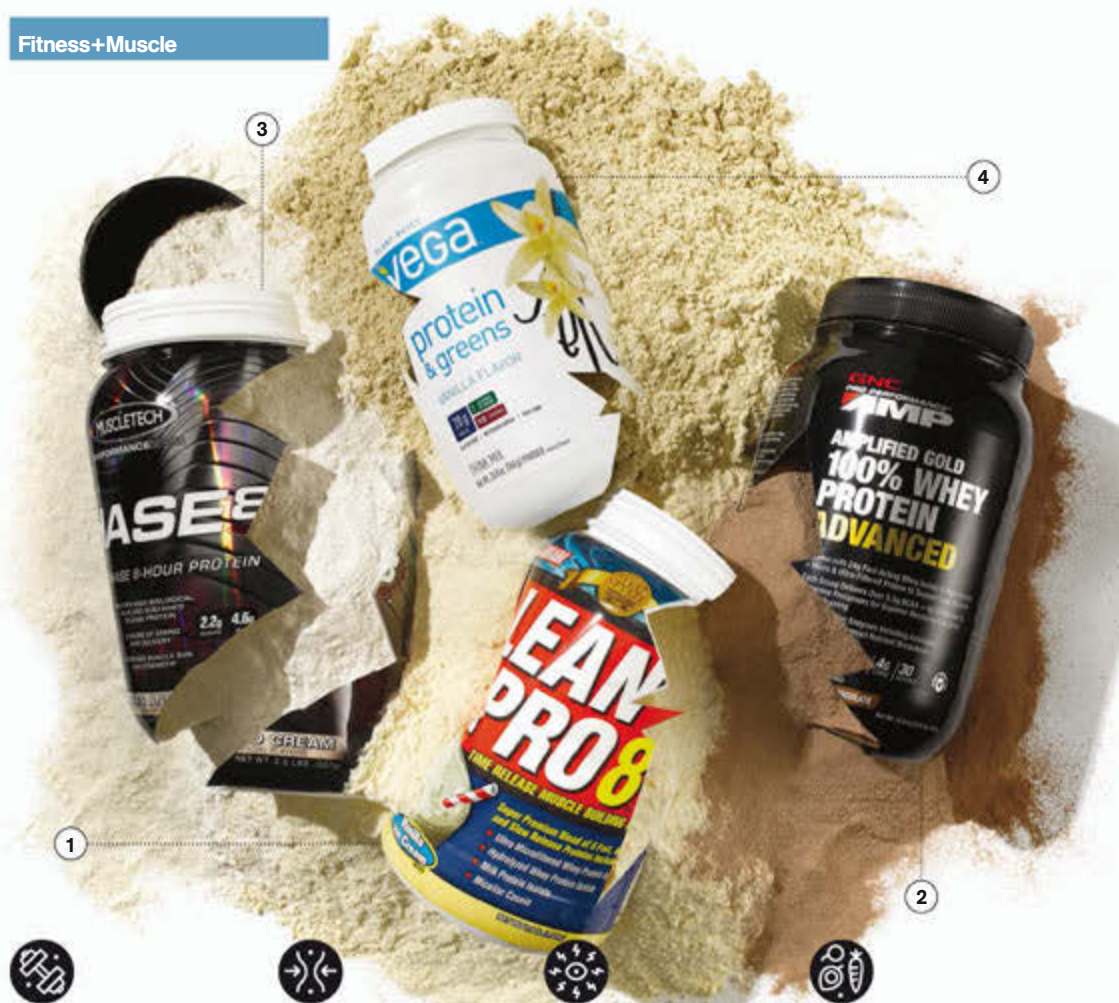
Performance Nutrition

Protein Powder Smackdown

Your smoothie can fuel your gains or fill you up with empty calories. Learn how to build strength with every sip. BY MICHAEL EASTER



TRAINERS WILL TELL YOU THAT TO MAXIMIZE MUSCLE GROWTH, you must eat a gram or more of protein per pound of your target body weight per day. For a 180-pound guy, that means wolfing down the equivalent of three chicken breasts, five rib eyes, or 5 pounds of tofu just to maintain his current muscle mass, let alone build more. That's why protein powder can be such an asset: One scoop delivers 20 to 25 grams of the nutrient, saving you several servings of soy curd or a bellyful of cow. Which powder is right for you? We chugged through 40 tubs and tapped top nutritionists to help you decide.



1/ Best for Bulking Up

If you lift big, shoot for a powder with a 2:1 ratio of protein to carbs. The reason: Carbs boost protein absorption, helping speed muscle recovery. This “rich but not too heavy” formula from Labrada Nutrition delivers the goods with a melon vanilla flavor that, unlike many brands, doesn’t leave a chemical aftertaste. It also supplies 4 grams of fiber per serving, curbing hunger long after you leave the gym.

LABRADA NUTRITION LEAN PRO 8 VANILLA ICE CREAM
\$63 FOR 2.9 LB, LABRADA.COM

PER SCOOP (50 g):	
225 CALORIES, 25 G PROTEIN, 13 G CARBS (4 G FIBER, 3 G SUGAR), 7 G FAT	
PRICE PER SCOOP	\$2.42
TASTE	7.6*
TEXTURE	8

2/ Best for Slimming Down

GNC’s “amplified” whey formula impressed our experts (see below) because it offers 24 grams of protein for relatively few calories. Our panel’s conclusion: It’s perfect for guys trying to simultaneously build muscle mass and uncover their abs. Plus, it tastes just like chocolate milk, making it one of the most palatable powders we tested. And at just \$1.27 per scoop, it’s also the most affordable.

GNC AMPLIFIED GOLD 100% WHEY ADVANCED DOUBLE RICH CHOCOLATE
\$95 FOR 5.12 LB, GNC.COM

PER SCOOP (31 g):	
120 CALORIES, 24 G PROTEIN, 4 G CARBS (1 G FIBER, 1 G SUGAR), 1 G FAT	
PRICE PER SCOOP	\$1.27
TASTE	7.5
TEXTURE	7.4

3/ Best for High-Intensity Training

HIT workouts (think CrossFit, *Insanity*, and *Men’s Health Anarchy*) make your metabolism skyrocket both during exercise and for hours afterward as your body works to repair and strengthen damaged muscle tissue. Muscletech’s Phase 8 leverages six forms of protein to deliver both an immediate dose of protein and a steady stream of amino acids for up to eight hours after a workout.

MUSCLETECH PERFORMANCE SERIES PHASE 8 COOKIES AND CREAM
\$72 FOR 4.5 LB, AMAZON.COM

PER SCOOP (41 g):	
150 CALORIES, 26 G PROTEIN, 7 G CARBS (1 G FIBER, 1 G SUGAR), 2 G FAT	
PRICE PER SCOOP	\$1.45
TASTE	6.8
TEXTURE	6.5

4/ Best for a Vegan Diet

When it comes to dairy-free protein, nothing beats a pea. Pea protein, the primary ingredient in this powder, has triple the amount of arginine that whey does. Studies show that boosting your intake of this amino acid can increase stamina, performance, and blood flow. The vanilla formula has a sweet kick that masks the potentially undesirable flavors of the greens in the mix, including spinach and broccoli.

VEGA PROTEIN & GREENS VANILLA
\$23 FOR 18.6 OZ, MYVEGA.COM

PER SCOOP (30 g):	
110 CALORIES, 20 G PROTEIN, 6 G CARBS (1 G FIBER, 2 G SUGAR), 0 G FAT	
PRICE PER SCOOP	\$1.67
TASTE	7
TEXTURE	4.5

WHEY: YOUR OPTIONS

YOU WORK OUT HARD. HERE’S HOW TO LOCK IN YOUR GAINS WITH PROTEIN POWDER.

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

To optimize muscle growth and fat loss, look for powders that have at least 20 grams of protein, no more than 6 grams of sugar, and limited artificial sweeteners, which can give the powder a cloying chemical aftertaste.

DON’T PLAY FAVORITES

For most guys, whether the shake has whey or casein doesn’t matter. Both contain leucine, the key amino acid of protein that helps you build muscle. What does matter is eating sufficient protein overall, not its source.

FORGET “THE WINDOW”

Protein synthesis (the process of building muscle) remains elevated for 24 hours after you exercise, not just during a brief post-workout window. So as long as you’re consuming enough protein, the timing doesn’t matter.

SKIP GAINER FORMULAS

They’re glorified milkshakes. Make your own without the empty calories: Blend 8 oz 1% milk, 1 Tbsp peanut butter, a banana, and ice for a base of 294 calories, 41 g carbs, and 13 g protein. Top it off with your favorite protein powder.

HONORABLE MENTIONS **Best Blendability:** EAS 100% Whey Protein Chocolate **Best Value:** Isopure Zero Carb Creamy Vanilla **Best Digestibility:** Met-Rx 100% Micellar Casein Protein Vanilla

OUR EXPERT PANEL: Christopher Mohr, Ph.D., R.D., a sports nutrition consultant based in Louisville; Kamal Patel, editor of Examine.com, a supplement watchdog site; Mike Roussell, Ph.D., R.D., a nutrition consultant in Rochester, NY, and Men’s Health’s Nutrition Know-It-All

* Ratings are based on a 10-point scale.

MIKE RUTT - HOKA ONE ONE ELITE 800 METER RUNNER



THIS IS NOT A SHOE. THIS IS AN INVITATION. YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED TO GO POUND THE PAVEMENT, GIVE THE HILLS A LITTLE HELL, AND PUT YOUR DAILY AMBITION TO THE TEST. TO GO UPTOWN, DOWNTOWN, CROSSTOWN, AND, FOR AS LONG AS IT TAKES, TO GET OUT-OF-TOWN. TO GO EXPRESS. TO BE A LOCAL. TO GO WITH THE CLIFTON 2 - 8.3 OUNCES OF SMOOTH RUNNING THAT SHOWS THESE STREETS WHO'S BOSS. LET'S GO.

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HOKAONEONE.COM





THE HARD WAY
CNN anchor Chris Cuomo chalks up his fast muscle gains to big lifts and consistent training.

How to Pack on 10 lb of Muscle

Chris Cuomo, an anchor on CNN *New Day* and a 44-year-old father of three, took our 90-day challenge. He achieved more than he ever imagined.

M

MORE. THAT IS WHAT WE ALL want, right? It is an existential force, but you don't have to bone up on Sartre to see how it applies to your body—more strength, more athleticism, and most of all,

more muscle. But once you've blown out 30 candles, the quest becomes harder. Your metabolism slows, your testosterone levels dip, and your muscle starts wasting away. Soon you're stuck in what the Viagra ads call "the age of knowing." That's a nice way of saying old and soft.

As a 44-year-old, I find that terrifying. But I also see it as a challenge. What would it take for a busy family guy like me to not only regain lost muscle but also add several pounds more? Tied to my quest for "more" was my need for "less." Less time for training, less stress on my achy back, and less desire for radical diet revisions.

I scheduled a body scan to get my baseline weight, body fat, and muscle mass (203 pounds, 12 percent, and 166 pounds, respectively). Then I teamed up with Eric Von Frohlich, a.k.a. EVF, the founder of Row House and EVF Performance in New York City, to chart my course. His first edict: "You're going to do it the hard way. There are no shortcuts to building muscle." I gave myself three months. Fate pushed it to six. But along the hard way, I learned five tips any man can use to build strength at any age.

1/ Create a Plan You'll Actually Follow

To fit my goals and schedule, EVF designed a three-day-a-week plan inspired by powerlifter Jim Wendler's 5/3/1 program, which gets its name from its rep formula. Each workout focuses on a big lift—squat, chest press, or deadlift—and includes "accessory" moves to shore up weaknesses. I capped off each session with a metabolic circuit to stay lean. (See "The Hard Way Workout" on the next page for my routine.)

Location courtesy EVF Performance CrossFit Columbus Circle

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2/ Stay the Course

Like many guys, I started freestyl-ing—lifting more weight than I was supposed to, cutting too many calories from my diet, and adding my own twists to EVF's master plan. Work harder, build muscle faster, right? Not always. Three weeks into my program, I wasn't any stronger. EVF offered two solutions: (1) Keep a training journal to stay focused on my goals and track my progress, and (2) take recovery more seriously. See this month's Beginner's Guide on page 64 to learn how to build more muscle between workouts.

3/ Create Your Own Mantra

"More is not always better" became mine. Wendler's method is intense. It's designed to bring you close to (but never reach) failure, which is what happens when you try to squeeze out one more rep. A safer strategy: Keep 1 rep in the bank. That way you optimize muscle growth without risking overtraining. My problem was *undertraining*. I traveled to cover the news and missed two months.

4/ Get Back on Your Horse

Indeed, muscle mass starts to decline after just two weeks of not training, Danish research reveals. But once I got back and lifted regularly for four weeks, I saw strength gains, especially in the deadlift. EVF was also teaching me "strength skills." On the press, EVF had me pin my shoulder blades back and down to create a stable base. Then I tried to pull the bar apart to engage my shoulders. Finally, I braced my core. By consciously activating more muscle before the lift, I was able to move more weight and trigger greater muscle growth.

5/ Redefine Victory

Six months into my quest, I had another body scan. At first glance, I was disappointed. I'd packed on 8 pounds of muscle, not 10. But my strength gains went way beyond my expectations: I'd more than doubled my deadlift and added serious pounds to my squat and bench! I felt stronger than ever. "Commitment is an act, not a word," Sartre once said. I realized that was my true goal all along: to become stronger every day.

THE HARD WAY WORKOUT

PACK ON STRENGTH AND SIZE IN RECORD TIME.

DIRECTIONS Do three workouts a week, following the set and rep schedule below for the primary exercise in each workout (deadlift, floor press, and squat). Rest 2 minutes between each set. Once you finish all 3 sets of the primary exercise, do the accessory exercises on the next page. Cap off each workout with a metabolic circuit, available at MensHealth.com/chrisuomo. Every 4 weeks, retest your 1-rep max in the primary lifts, and restart the 4-week cycle. Your goal: Gain 10 pounds of muscle in 12 weeks.

	WEEK 1 REPS	WEEK 2 REPS	WEEK 3 REPS	WEEK 4 REPS
SET 1	60%* × 5	65% × 3	70% × 5	35% × 5
SET 2	70% × 5	70% × 3	75% × 3	45% × 5
SET 3	75% × 5+	80% × 3+	85% × 1+	55% × 5

*Percentage of 1-rep max



CHRIS CUOMO'S TRANSFORMATION

WEIGHT
203 to 215 lb
BODY FAT PERCENTAGE
12.2 to 14.5
MUSCLE MASS
166 to 174 lb
SQUAT
225 to 315 lb
DEADLIFT
135 to 315 lb
BENCH
215 to 255 lb

PRIMARY EXERCISES DAY 1: DEADLIFT

Load a barbell and roll it against your shins. Bend at your hips and knees and grab the bar using an overhand grip, your hands just beyond shoulder width. Without rounding your back, pull your torso up and back, thrusting your hips forward as you stand. Lower the bar to the floor, keeping it as close to your body as possible.

DAY 2: FLOOR PRESS

Grab a barbell and lie on the floor. Using an overhand grip that's slightly beyond shoulder width, hold the barbell above your chest, arms straight. Your knees should be bent and feet flat. Keeping your elbows tucked and without allowing your butt or hips to lift, lower the bar until your upper arms touch the floor. Pause, and press the bar back up.

DAY 3: SQUAT

Hold a barbell across your upper back using an overhand grip; your feet should be shoulder-width apart. Keeping your back flat and chest up, brace your core and push your hips back as you lower your body until the tops of your thighs are at least parallel to the floor. Pause, and reverse the movement to return to the starting position.

Men's Health URBANATHLON

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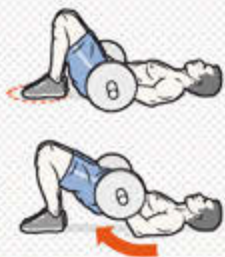


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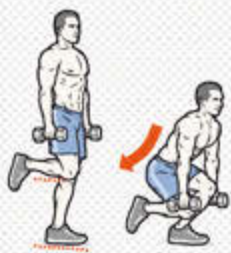


ACCESSORY LIFTS DO 3 SETS OF 10 REPS FOR EACH MOVE BELOW (UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED). REST 1 MINUTE BETWEEN SETS, USING WEIGHTS THAT CHALLENGE YOU TO COMPLETE ALL 3.

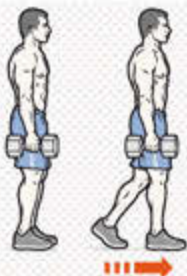
DAY 1

**1/ Barbell Hip Raise**

Lie on your back on the floor with a barbell above your hips, your knees bent and feet flat. Raise your hips until they're aligned with your knees and shoulders. Pause, and return to the starting position.

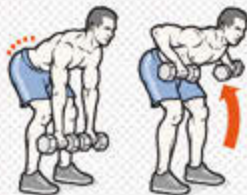
**2/ Single-Leg Deadlift**

Grab two dumbbells and stand on your left foot, raising your right foot behind you. Push your hips back and lower your body as far as you can. Return to the starting position. Do all your reps, switch legs, and repeat.

**3/ Suitcase Carry**

Grab a heavy dumbbell (half your weight) in your right hand and let it hang at arm's length by your side. Keeping your chest up, brace your core and walk for 30 seconds. Switch hands, turn around, and walk back.

DAY 2

**1/ Dumbbell Row**

Grab two dumbbells, push your hips back, and lower your torso until it's almost parallel to the floor. Let the weights hang at arm's length. Pull the weights to your sides, pause, and return to the starting position.

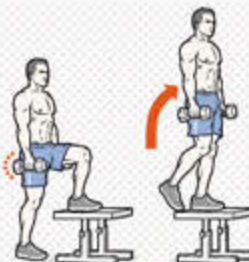
**2/ Lying Triceps Extension**

Hold two dumbbells over your head with your arms straight. Without moving your upper arms, lower the dumbbells until your forearms are slightly lower than parallel to the floor. Return to the starting position and repeat.

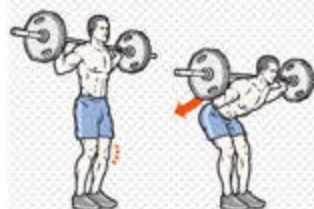
**3/ Pullup**

Using an overhand grip that's beyond shoulder width, hang at arm's length from a pullup bar. Pull your chest to the bar, squeezing your shoulder blades together. Pause, and slowly return to the starting position.

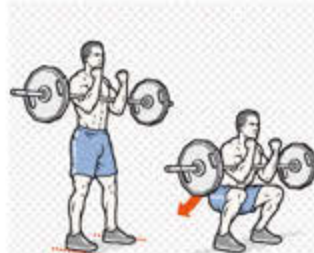
DAY 3

**1/ Dumbbell Stepup**

Holding a pair of dumbbells at your sides, stand with your left foot on a bench. Push your body up till your left leg is straight (keep your right foot elevated). Return to the starting position. Do 10 reps, switch legs, and repeat.

**2/ Good Morning**

Position a barbell across your upper back, holding it with an overhand grip. Brace your core, push your hips back, and lower your torso as far as you can. Pause, and raise your torso back to the starting position.

**3/ Zercher Squat**

Hold a barbell tightly against your chest in the crooks of your arms, keeping your feet shoulder-width apart. Push your hips back and lower your body as far as you can. Pause, and push back up to the starting position.



INSIDER TRAINING

By David Jack

What's the best way for me to do supersets?

DANIEL, AUSTIN, TX
It depends on your goal. If you're trying to bulk up a specific body part, do back-to-back sets of exercises that zero in on that muscle group—dumbbell chest press paired with dumbbell flys to target your pecs, for example. If you're chasing total-body strength and a greater metabolic burn, pair exercises that hit noncompeting muscle groups. By doing back-to-back sets of the goblet squat and pushup, for example, you'll allow your quads to rest while you work your chest. Regardless of the way you do supersets, allow 30 to 90 seconds between them to give your muscles time to recover.

How often should I change the exercises I do?

JOSH, CHICAGO, IL
The classic advice is every 4 to 6 weeks. But you don't need to make big changes to see big results. For my favorite ways to switch up a routine, download Layar to your smartphone and scan this page.



David Jack is the owner of Activlab in Phoenix. Check out his new DVD at BodyBattleDVD.com.

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CONTINUED FROM THE JUNE ISSUE OF *MEN'S HEALTH*

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1/ Pre-Challenge: CRAWL AND SPIDERMAN PUSH-UP

(a) **Crawl:** Start on all fours with hips low; crawl with arms and legs in opposition.

(b) **Spiderman Push-up:** As you descend on your push-up, bend one leg and bring that knee to your elbow—repeat on the other side.

» Perform 20 seconds of work and 40 seconds of rest for each. Complete 10 total minutes.

a



b



Chris Powell

Celebrity Trainer and Transformation Pro

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2/Pre-Challenge:

PUSH-UP, MOUNTAIN CLIMBER, SQUAT JUMP

- (a) **Push-up:** Place hands a little wider than shoulder width and keep your body in a rigid plank position. Lower and raise your entire body while keeping your core tight.
- (b) **Mountain Climber:** In a push-up position, bring one knee up into your stomach without letting that foot touch the ground. Then quickly do the same with the opposite knee.
- (c) **Squat Jump:** Descend into a deep squat and forcefully drive upward as high as possible, making sure to land in a stable squat position.

» Perform one push-up, one mountain climber with each leg, and one squat jump—this is “one rep.” You will perform 5 total reps then rest as needed. Continue these sets for a total of 10 minutes. Count the number of sets you complete and try to beat it the next time you try the workout.



3/Pre-Challenge:

THRUSTERS, PLANK JACKS, EXTENDED PLANK

- (a) **Thrusters:** Start in a standing position, squat down to place your hands on the ground slightly in front of your body and kick your legs out and back landing in a push-up position. Jump your feet back up toward your hands and stand upright.
- (b) **Plank Jacks:** In a plank position on elbows and forearms, jump both your feet out, landing into wide position, then jump them back into the starting position. Keep your core rigid throughout the movement.
- (c) **Extended Plank:** Get into a push-up position and walk your hands out in front of you while maintaining a flat and stable core. Hands should be out as far as possible while maintaining your solid core position.

» Perform 10 thrusters, 10 plank jacks, and a 10-second extended plank. Rest as needed and perform 5 total rounds.

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1

shoulder-width grip

+ resistance band
(loop around knees)
emphasis = form

2

+ bench (jump up,
lower slowly)
emphasis =
strength≥ 4 classic reps
(skip band and bench)read this
for more

3

3 TO 5
SETS

underband grip

PROJECT TWO

Do 10 Perfect Chinups

Sometimes the best way to push yourself is by using a little pull. Conquer a classic strength benchmark with this 3-step plan.

THE
BETTER
MAN
PROJECT

YOU SET THE BAR HIGH IN EVERY ASPECT OF YOUR LIFE—AT home, at play, especially at work. But when you're asked to pull your weight up to it, you—like a lot of guys—might fail. "The chinup is one of the toughest exercises for the same reason it's so powerful: It hits every muscle in your upper body," says Tony Gentilcore, c.s.c.s., cofounder of Cressey Sports Performance. "And because it's a body-weight move, it's a great indicator of relative strength, or how strong you are for your height and weight."

Many guys avoid the chinup like the Lifetime channel, preferring the relative ease of lat pulldowns. But not you—not anymore. This project will help you not only pass the bar but also prove you're a man who pulls his weight.

What You'll Need

CHINUP BAR
RESISTANCE BAND
FLAT BENCH
PERSEVERANCE

How to Do It

1. First, determine your starting point. Hang at arm's length from a chinup bar using an underhand, shoulder-width grip. Pull your chest to the bar as you squeeze your shoulders together. Pause, and slowly lower yourself back to the starting position. Do as many as you can. Repeat this test every week to gauge your progress.

2. Were you able to do at least four chinups? Then skip to step 3. If not, then work up to it by performing the fol-

lowing chinup variations once or twice a week. "The assisted chinup helps you perfect your form, while the negative chinup develops your pulling strength," says Gentilcore.

BAND-ASSISTED CHINUP

Loop a resistance band around the bar, thread one end through the other, and pull to cinch the knot. Place one or both knees into the loop and then do a chinup. Do 3 sets of 8 to 10 reps.

NEGATIVE CHINUP

Remove the band and stand on a bench. Jump up and grab the bar, using momentum to pull your chest to it. Hold for 2 seconds. Take 5 seconds to lower yourself to the bench. Do 3 sets of 4 to 6 reps.

3. Once you can do at least four chinups, move on to unassisted sets. A key requirement: "Don't lift to failure," Gentilcore says. "Every rep should be powerful." Say you can do six chinups max. Shoot for 3 to 5 sets of 3 reps (half your max) throughout the day. (Having a bar at home helps.) After a month, your max should increase by 50 percent or more, says Gentilcore. Once you reach a new max, cut those reps in half and repeat the process. Your goal: at least 10 reps with perfect form.

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AVAILABLE AT



TARGET.

Your marching orders: Step it up on your rest days, and you too will be this ripped.



Beginner's Guide

Recovery

Muscles don't grow during workouts—they grow *between* them. Follow these tips to recover faster, gain strength quicker, and pack on more lean mass.

BY KELSEY CANNON

THE FUNDAMENTALS

DROP AND ROLL

As soon as you finish your workout, grab a foam roller (our pick: Rumble Roller, \$45, amazon.com) and give each muscle group five rolls. You'll not only increase bloodflow but also break up knots and adhesions, boosting mobility and power, says Brad Schoenfeld, Ph.D., C.S.C.S., author of *The M.A.X. Muscle Plan*.

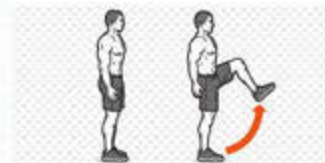
REDEFINE "REST"

Allow 48 hours between workouts to optimize recovery, but don't just sit around. "Doing light activity on rest days accelerates repair by cycling key nutrients through your muscles," says Schoenfeld. Check out the moves on this page and see "Feed Your Gains" to take in more of your most critical nutrient: protein.

HIT THE SACK EARLY

"Your body produces its highest levels of growth hormone while you sleep," says Schoenfeld, "which helps remodel your muscles into stronger, larger versions of themselves." Scientists think skimping on shuteye can increase muscle breakdown and inhibit protein synthesis. Log at least seven hours a night.

YOUR OFF-DAY WORKOUT



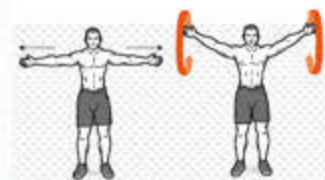
1/ Walking High-Knees

Stand tall with your feet shoulder-width apart. Raise your left knee as high as you can and take a step. Repeat with your right leg. Walk 10 yards, turn around, and walk back.



2/ Lateral Shuffle

Stand with your feet just beyond shoulder width. Push your hips back and lower your body (keep your hips slightly higher than your knees). Shuffle 10 steps right and 10 steps left.



3/ Arm Circles

Hold your arms straight out to your sides, palms forward. Start by making small circles, and progress to larger ones. Do 10 circles forward and then 10 circles backward.

FEED YOUR GAINS



Consuming at least 20 grams of whey protein after a workout can kickstart recovery, report scientists in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Sick of shakes? Pack a turkey-and-cheese sandwich on whole grain bread. "It has an optimal mix of protein and carbs to stimulate muscle growth," says *MH* nutrition advisor Mike Roussell, Ph.D.



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Max Out Your Grill's Firepower

Your backyard cooker can do more than just char hot dogs. Unlock its potential and expand your grill skills. **BY NICK FAUCHALD**



AMONG OUR ABILITIES AS MEN—THE CAPACITY TO FORM religions, write poetry, and sing karaoke—is our talent for cooking food with fire. Or at least attempting to: Anyone who has attended a lackluster backyard cookout has suffered through medium-rare chicken, briquette-textured steaks, and spatula-mangled fish. Grillers can avoid these BBQ botches by precisely deploying tactical heat. From tender slow-cooked roasts to flash-seared whole fish, this guide will help you fire up better food right now. It's about damn time that we men treat the grill like the versatile tool it really is.



Obligatory disclaimer: The USDA advises that all unground red meat be cooked to at least 145°F to avoid the risk of foodborne illness. There, we said it.

● ● ● ● ● GRILL HEAT LEVEL

Maryland-Style Pit Beef

This sandwich stacks on the beef and comes dripping with a horseradish-spiked tiger sauce. Slow-cook the meat and then sear it to coax the cut to a juicy, ruby medium-rare.

What You'll Need

¼	CUP KOSHER SALT
1	TBSP FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER
1	TBSP GARLIC POWDER
1	TBSP PAPRIKA
1	TSP DRIED OREGANO
1	TSP GROUND CUMIN
½	TSP GROUND CAYENNE
1	10 LB TOP SIRLOIN ROAST (A.K.A. SIRLOIN TIP ROAST), TRIMMED OF ANY CHUNKS OF HARD OUTER FAT AND CUT IN HALF
16	KAISER ROLLS, SPLIT
2	ONIONS, THINLY SLICED

1. In a bowl, mix the salt, pepper, garlic powder, paprika, oregano, cumin, and cayenne. Rub this into the meat; wrap in plastic. Refrigerate at least 1 hour (and up to 8).
2. Preheat the grill for indirect grilling, with high-heat and low-heat sides. Make a foil packet of wood chips and place it on the hot side; put the beef on the cooler side. Cover the grill and cook, flipping the beef after 30 minutes, until a meat thermometer inserted into the middle of each piece reads 115°F, about 1 hour.
3. Transfer the meat to the hot side of the grill, searing on all sides until its internal temperature reaches 140°F, about 5 minutes per side. Let it rest for 10 to 15 minutes.
4. Thinly slice the meat against the grain and pile it onto rolls. Serve with tiger sauce and onions. *Makes about 16 sandwiches*

Tiger Sauce

On a cutting board, mince a garlic clove and use the side of a chef's knife to mash it with a pinch of salt until it forms a paste. Put this into a bowl. Then add 1 cup store-bought horseradish, 1 cup mayonnaise, 2 tsp freshly squeezed lemon juice, and 1 tsp each of kosher salt and freshly ground pepper. Whisk everything well to combine. The sauce will keep in the refrigerator for up to 4 days. (Leftover sauce will be great on grilled chicken and roasted potatoes.)

THREE WAYS TO BRING ON THE HEAT

MAKE USE OF YOUR GRILLS VERSATILITY.



SMOLDERING

Mellower temps help meat turn tender inside without burning the outside. Low-heat grilling works best with hunks of meat like beef roast (see left), whole chicken, or leg of lamb.



MODERATE

Most gas grills pathetically call this "high." It's the ideal range for medium-thick steaks, chicken pieces, fatty meats like lamb (see next page), and produce thicker than an inch.



SCORCHING

This is potent, blazing firepower capable of developing a deep, flavorful crust on steaks, salmon, burgers, mackerel (see last page of this article), and hearty vegetables. Fire! Fire!



KEEP THINGS MOVING

Crosshatch grill marks make for an attractive plate—but they're also a sign of a missed opportunity. While grilling over high heat, you should move your food around frequently, about every couple of minutes or so, to acquire that delicious crust all over the food. If your grill grate is clean (break out that grill brush, buddy), hot, and oiled, then you won't have to worry about your ingredients sticking to the metal.

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Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts,

including peanuts, as part of a diet low in saturated fat & cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.



Meet your new favorite cut: A bone-in lamb saddle chop tastes as if a beef T-bone steak and a regular lamb chop made sweet, forbidden love. It's meaty and intense.

● ● ● ● GRILL HEAT LEVEL

Lamb Saddle Chops with Mint-Yogurt Sauce

This cut, also called the double loin chop or English chop, combines the well-marbled loin and the meaty tenderloin. A simple yogurt sauce balances the lamb's smoky richness.

What You'll Need

¾	CUP 2% PLAIN GREEK YOGURT
¼	CUP EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
2	TBSP CIDER VINEGAR
2	TSP DIJON MUSTARD
2	TSP SUGAR
¼	CUP FINELY CHOPPED MINT LEAVES
4	LAMB SADDLE CHOPS (15 TO 20 OZ EACH)

1. In a bowl, whisk the yogurt, olive oil, cider vinegar, mustard, sugar, and mint. Season with kosher salt and freshly ground pepper. Refrigerate until ready to serve, up to 4 hours.
2. Preheat the grill with medium-heat and low-heat sides. Generously season the lamb all over with salt and pepper. Grill the chops over medium heat, covered, turning frequently, until charred on all sides, about 7 minutes total. Then move them to the low-heat side of the grill and cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of each chop registers 135°F for medium rare, 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer them to a plate and let them rest at least 5 minutes. Spoon yogurt sauce over the chops and serve. *Makes 4 servings*

Charred Green Beans

Wash and trim 1 pound of fresh green beans. In a large bowl, toss the beans with 1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil. Season them with kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, and put everything into a grill basket (see below). Grill the beans over medium heat, tossing occasionally, until crisp-tender and charred in spots, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer them to a serving bowl, drizzle on more olive oil, and season with additional salt and pepper, if necessary. Toss the beans once more and serve with the grilled lamb saddle.

INDIRECT HEAT: YOUR DIRECTIVES

TRANSFORM YOUR GRILL INTO AN OUT-DOOR OVEN!



FOR A GAS GRILL

This is easy: Set one burner to medium or high and the other burner to low. If your grill has three burners, fire up two adjacent panels and keep the third on low. Now shut the lid and have a beer.



FOR A CHARCOAL GRILL

You'll need a chimney starter full of hot charcoal. Dump half onto one side of the grill two to three coals deep (for high heat) or one to two coals deep (medium). Scatter the rest over the other side for low heat.

ABOUT THAT GAS GRILL ...

"High" heat on most gas grills is only about as hot as a medium to medium-hot charcoal fire. So make sure that your rig has heavyweight steel or cast-iron grates for better heat retention.



▶ A CASE FOR THE BASKET

A grill basket—basically a pot made of wire mesh—works great for green beans, peeled shrimp, sliced onions, or any slender or leafy food that might otherwise slip through the grate. Pick up the sturdy Sur La Table Pro Nonstick Mesh Grilling Basket (\$40, surlatable.com). You can also use it to grill clams: Rinse a dozen, throw them in the basket, close the lid, and cook on high till the little guys open.

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7g
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CALORIES



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●●●●● GRILL HEAT LEVEL

Grilled Mackerel with Lime and Green Peppercorn Sauce

Oily fish won't stick to the grate, and it's tough to overcook. So give this recipe for whole mackerel a go. The high heat crisps the skin and infuses the flesh with a smoky kick.

What You'll Need

▶	VEGETABLE OIL
4	WHOLE ATLANTIC (A.K.A. BOSTON) MACKEREL, CLEANED
¾	STICK UNSALTED BUTTER
¼	CUP JARRED PICKLED GREEN PEPPERCORNS (AVAILABLE AT ASIAN MARKETS)
3	TBSP FRESH LIME JUICE
▶	LIME WEDGES, FOR SERVING

1. Preheat a hot, well-oiled grill. Season the fish inside and out with salt and pepper.
2. Grill the fish, uncovered, turning once, until it's crisped and the flesh in the cavity is white, not rose-colored, 5 to 7 minutes per side. Transfer it to plates.
3. In a medium saucepan (either over a stove or on top of the grill), melt the butter on medium heat. Add the pickled peppercorns and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Cook, swirling the pan frequently, until the butter begins to brown, 4 to 6 minutes. Stir in the lime juice (the mixture will bubble up) and simmer until the flavors meld, about 20 seconds.
4. Drizzle the mackerel with the butter sauce and top each fish with a few green peppercorns. Sprinkle with flaky sea salt and serve with lime wedges. *Makes 4 servings*

Grilled Corn with Herbed Cream Cheese

Blend 4 ounces of room-temperature cream cheese with 1 Tbsp za'atar (a spice blend found in Indian markets), 1 Tbsp lemon juice, ½ tsp lemon zest, and salt and pepper to taste. Brush 8 ears shucked corn with olive oil and grill over a hot fire, turning frequently, until charred all over, 8 to 10 minutes. Spread the cream cheese mixture over the corn, sprinkle with more za'atar, and serve.

OUR EXPERT

Nick Fauchald is coauthor of the new cookbook *Feeding the Fire*, with Joe Carroll, who is the owner of Fette Sau and St. Anselm restaurants in Brooklyn.



NUTRITION KNOW-IT-ALL

By Mike Roussell

How many antioxidants should I be consuming daily?

MARK, BALTIMORE, MD
Actually, no one knows how many of the free-radical fighters you need. Scientists are still figuring out a way to accurately measure the potency of antioxidants. Just strive to eat a variety of different-colored fruits and vegetables daily. The unique colors signal different antioxidants—and the variety of antioxidants you eat may matter more than the quantity, studies suggest.

Which protein is better for me—steak or chicken?

JESSE, LOS ANGELES, CA
Both. Sure, they differ slightly in calories, but from a muscle-building standpoint, steak and chicken are basically the same. Plus, a diet that includes either (or both) may help lower your risk of cardiovascular disease. Besides, limiting the types of meat in your diet can quickly lead to boredom. So tuck into turkey, pork, lamb, bison, fish, and shellfish too.



Mike Roussell, Ph.D., is a nutrition consultant based in upstate New York. Tweet him: @mikeroussell



▶ BEWARE THE FLARE!

There's a fine but crucial line between seared and burnt. It's okay to have a flame lick your steak. But anytime you witness a plume of fire consuming your food, take a spray bottle filled with water, aim it at the source, and douse the demon. Stop sweating the cancer risk too. The USDA says eating moderate amounts of grilled (not burnt) meat, fish, and poultry doesn't pose a health problem.

I have this need to nap, but when I take one, it only buys me a couple of hours. I can't control when I fall asleep. I'm missing things at work, and it's tough to concentrate throughout the day. *What's going on?*

WHY AM I TIRED ALL THE TIME?

If you experience any of these symptoms:

- Feeling tired all the time (excessive daytime sleepiness)
- Weakening of muscles when you feel emotions like laughter (cataplexy)
- Poor quality sleep (sleep disruption)
- Vivid dreams or feeling unable to move or speak when falling asleep or waking up (hypnagogic hallucination and sleep paralysis)

It could be narcolepsy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

morethantired.com/MH | 855.337.8400 | Talk to a sleep specialist

Yes, You Can Pickle That “Slice a vegetable and pour vinegar on it, wait a few hours, and you’ll have a pickle,” says Karen Solomon, author of *Jam It, Pickle It, Cure It*. Use this chart, created with her help, to turn peak-season produce into the ultimate snack. **BY PAUL KITA**

QUICK-PICKLE PRINCIPLES

IT'S TIME TO GRADUATE FROM GHERKINS.



SLICE AND DICE YOUR INGREDIENTS

The density and composition of the produce, as well as the size of the pieces, all affect the length of the pickling process. So thinly slice firm ingredients like carrots, shred bulky ones like cabbages and onions, and peel thick-skinned items like pears so they'll absorb more of the flavorful brine.



DROWN THEM IN DELICIOUSNESS

Brine, in chef-speak, is a solution of spices, salt, and liquid that gives pickled foods their tangy flavor. Mix and match your spices and liquids to come up with a combo you prefer. The example shown in the 16-ounce jars on these pages uses breakfast radishes, with the “zesty” flavor pack and rice vinegar.

1

Pick Your Produce (Choose One)
The fresher the fruit (yes, fruit!) or vegetable, the better the result.



CUCUMBERS
CUT INTO SPEARS

CARROTS
SLICED INTO DISKS

CABBAGE
THINLY SLICED

WHOLE STRING BEANS
BLANCHED



BEETS PEELED, BLANCHED, AND CUBED



RADISHES
HALVED



DAIKON RADISH
SLICED INTO HALF-MOONS



GREEN TOMATOES
QUARTERED



RED ONIONS
THINLY SLICED



PEARS
PEELED AND QUARTERED



STRAWBERRIES
HALVED



PINEAPPLE
CUBED



PACK IT!
Pint mason jars make perfect snack batches.

2

Add a “Flavor Pack”
Figure about 1 Tbsp of each ingredient unless noted.



CLASSIC DILL SEED + CELERY SEED + BLACK PEPPERCORNS + MUSTARD SEED



GREEK FRESH OREGANO (2 SPRIGS) + SMASHED GARLIC + WHOLE CLOVES + LEMON PEEL



ZESTY PEELED GINGER + ORANGE PEEL + TOPS OF GREEN ONIONS



SPICY RED-PEPPER FLAKES + THINLY SLICED JALAPEÑO ROUNDS



CHINESE SZECHUAN PEPPERCORNS + CHINESE FIVE-SPICE POWDER + STAR ANISE



INDIAN MUSTARD, CORIANDER, AND FENNEL SEEDS + CARDAMOM PODS + ½ CINNAMON STICK



3

+ Salt and a Vinegar
1 tsp kosher salt; vinegar, till half full

DISTILLED WHITE VINEGAR



CIDER VINEGAR



WINE VINEGAR
(WHITE OR RED)



RICE VINEGAR
(THIS IS LESS POTENT THAN THE OTHERS, SO IF YOU USE IT, FILL THE WHOLE JAR, NOT JUST HALF)





4

Top Off the Jar with Water
No, really. That's it. Plain old tap water will work.

All that's left to do is seal the jar and shake it well to dissolve the salt and evenly distribute the ingredients. Then put the jar in the refrigerator. You should notice a difference in taste overnight, but for best results wait three to five days, when the vegetables turn tender-crisp. Your pickled produce will keep for about two weeks in the fridge, but if you notice any mold growth or funky aromas, pitch it.

CRUNCH TIME

They're salty, snappy, and great with a beer: Make pickled vegetables and fruits your new go-tos. They also fit in well alongside grilled meats, sliced and tossed into a salad, or even dropped into a cocktail.

Crush All Your Cravings

Your food fixation is likely a different desire in disguise. Don't cave! Fight back with these simple strategies instead. **BY JULIE STEWART**

THE CRAVING

A MEATY, SAUCE-SLATHERED BIG MAC



Did you frequent the Golden Arches with your high school friends or after acing your college exams? Those fond memories are mixed with the food you ate, says Nicole Avena, Ph.D., a neuroscientist at Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

THE COUNTERMEASURE

► Order a different kind of nostalgia—and hold the calories. **Check your high school bud's Facebook page**, or listen to your favorite band from college, Avena says. Even minor diversions can help you through the fast-food fixation.



THE WHOLE BAG OF POTATO CHIPS



Carbs, salt, and fat are the Curly, Larry, and Moe of food: As a trio, they're trouble, stirring up chemicals that block your ability to stop feeding your face, says Nicole Giuliani, Ph.D., a psychology researcher at the University of Oregon.

► Think: *Eating this food is not in line with my goals.* You'll activate the brain regions responsible for resolving internal conflict, says Giuliani. Also **try snacking on slices of crunchy raw jicama** or kale roasted till crispy.



A SUNDAE WITH CHOCOLATE FUDGE



Sugar has the power to hijack your gray matter, says Avena. Her research has found that the white stuff may intensify your cravings for pleasure-producing chemicals, such as dopamine and opioids. It's a high you're after.

► Smart swaps give you a fix without busting your gut. Lust after fudge? **Have a square of dark chocolate.** Still hankering for the creaminess of the ice cream? **Eat Greek yogurt** with a touch of honey. The jones will ease.



A HUGE, GREASY HANGOVER BREAKFAST



You're thirsty, not hungry. Booze leads to dehydration, which makes you think you need sodium-laden diner fare. If you do eat more salt, you'll further your dehydration and plunge yourself deeper into hangover hell, says Avena.

► You need water and antioxidants to flush out alcohol's toxins. Fructose, a sugar found in fruit, helps metabolize alcohol, reports a Mount Sinai School of Medicine study review. So **make a fruit salad**, chug H₂O, and ponder your many mistakes.



Want a meal with even more staying power? Toss all this with whole wheat pasta.



THE FAST FOODIE

FASTER THAN A DEADLY DRIVE-THRU, WHIP UP A PILE OF PROTEIN AND LEAFY GREENS, PLUS A SPICY KICK IN THE PALATE.

Spicy Sausage with Chicken and Kale

Heat a dime-size amount of olive oil in a skillet on medium. Add ¼ pound loose pork sausage and ¼ pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, chopped. Cook, stirring, until the meats brown, about 3 minutes. Stir in 2 minced garlic cloves and a pinch each of red-pepper flakes and ground cumin. Add ½ cup reduced-sodium chicken broth and 1 cup chopped kale; cover and simmer till the greens wilt and the meats cook through, 5 to 7 minutes. Season to taste. **Makes 1 serving**

RECIPE BY JEREMY LIEB, EXECUTIVE CHEF OF BOCA, CINCINNATI

PER SERVING
505 CALORIES, 40 G PROTEIN, 13 G CARBOHYDRATES (2 G FIBER), 33 G FAT

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Layer a two-button jacket over your casual tee to avoid looking like one of the inmates.

3 Knockout Summer Suits

The heat forces most guys to shed layers. We'll help you maintain your look—and your cool. BY DAN MICHEL



GROWING UP ON A COMMUNE MEANT FEW FASHION CHOICES FOR PABLO Schreiber. Birthday suit, yes. Tailored suit, never. “I spent most of my time either naked or wearing Superman underwear,” he says. “But I very rarely wore anything even close to formal.”

Fortunately, with maturity comes perspective—and usually the desire to start wearing pants. Today, the 37-year-old star of *Orange Is the New Black* and HBO’s new comedy series *The Brink* firmly believes that what you wear and how you wear it set the tone for who you are as a man. Think it’s time to sport a more mature look? Adapt the following suits to your personal style, and you’ll start making more grownup choices, guaranteed.

1

The Trusty Two-Button

If you don't wear suits often or you want something that'll work for most of the year, invest in a two-button lightweight wool suit in gray or navy, like the one on the previous page. "It's the most dynamic suit you can buy," says Ryan Tristan Jin, author of *How to Tie a Tie*. "You can wear it nearly year-round to almost any occasion." Since you want an all-season breathable fabric, look for the Super 100 wool suits, which are light enough to wear in the summer, spring, and fall. (Skip the linen and seersucker—those are summer-only fabrics.) The higher the number, the finer and denser the fabric. Don't know the grade of the wool? Bunch the fabric in your hands and let go. If it holds wrinkles, it's too thick for the heat.

CALVIN KLEIN COLLECTION SUIT, \$1,295

MICHAEL KORS T-SHIRT, \$95

2

The Sophisticated Three-Piece

An extra layer of fabric might seem weird for a guy to throw on at the height of summer, but bear with us. "Just take off the jacket, and the vest will keep the tailored look intact," says Eric Jennings, men's fashion director at Saks Fifth Avenue. The key: Make sure the vest fits close to your body and your shirt has a slim cut—without extra material that will blouse out at the bottom, adds Jennings. And keep that bottom vest button undone, as you do with your suit jacket. Schreiber says he's drawn to bold prints but admits they can look exaggerated on his hulking 6'4" frame. "Subtler choices work better for tall guys like me," he says.

J. HILBURN SUIT, \$1,060

HAMILTON SHIRTS SHIRT, \$265

THOMAS PINK POCKET SQUARE, \$60

THE TIE BAR TIE, \$25

IWC WATCH, \$12,400



Styling: Brian Boyé, grooming: Jessica Ortiz/The Wall Group



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YOU

SAY SOMETHING

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The Double-Breasted Cotton

A lightweight, breathable fabric like cotton is always a smart choice in the sweltering summer. But if you want to make a more surprising move, go with a double-breasted cotton jacket. “These suits look great and stand out because they create a more structured, masculine silhouette,” says Jin. “The overlapping front flaps trim your waist, and the peaked lapels draw attention to your shoulders, accentuating your natural V shape.” (Just be sure to keep the jacket buttoned when you’re standing.) Going casual? Wear a neutral, fine-gauge knit T-shirt underneath the jacket. “The laid-back look of a suit and a T-shirt really works for me,” Schreiber says. “Even when I’m dressing up, I still like to look a little funky.”

SALVATORE FERRAGAMO SUIT, \$2,200

MICHAEL KORS T-SHIRT, \$95

BONOBOS POCKET SQUARE, \$42

IWC WATCH, \$12,400



**MH
MUST-
HAVE**

THE SOUPED-UP RACE WATCH

The only thing more American than muscle cars is a good underdog story. This Baume & Mercier timepiece celebrates both by commemorating the 50th anniversary of American Carroll Shelby's upset over Ferrari at the FIA International GT Championship. Its elegant design features racing stripes and the classic Shelby icon—and its Swiss automatic movement means it won't run out of gas anytime soon.

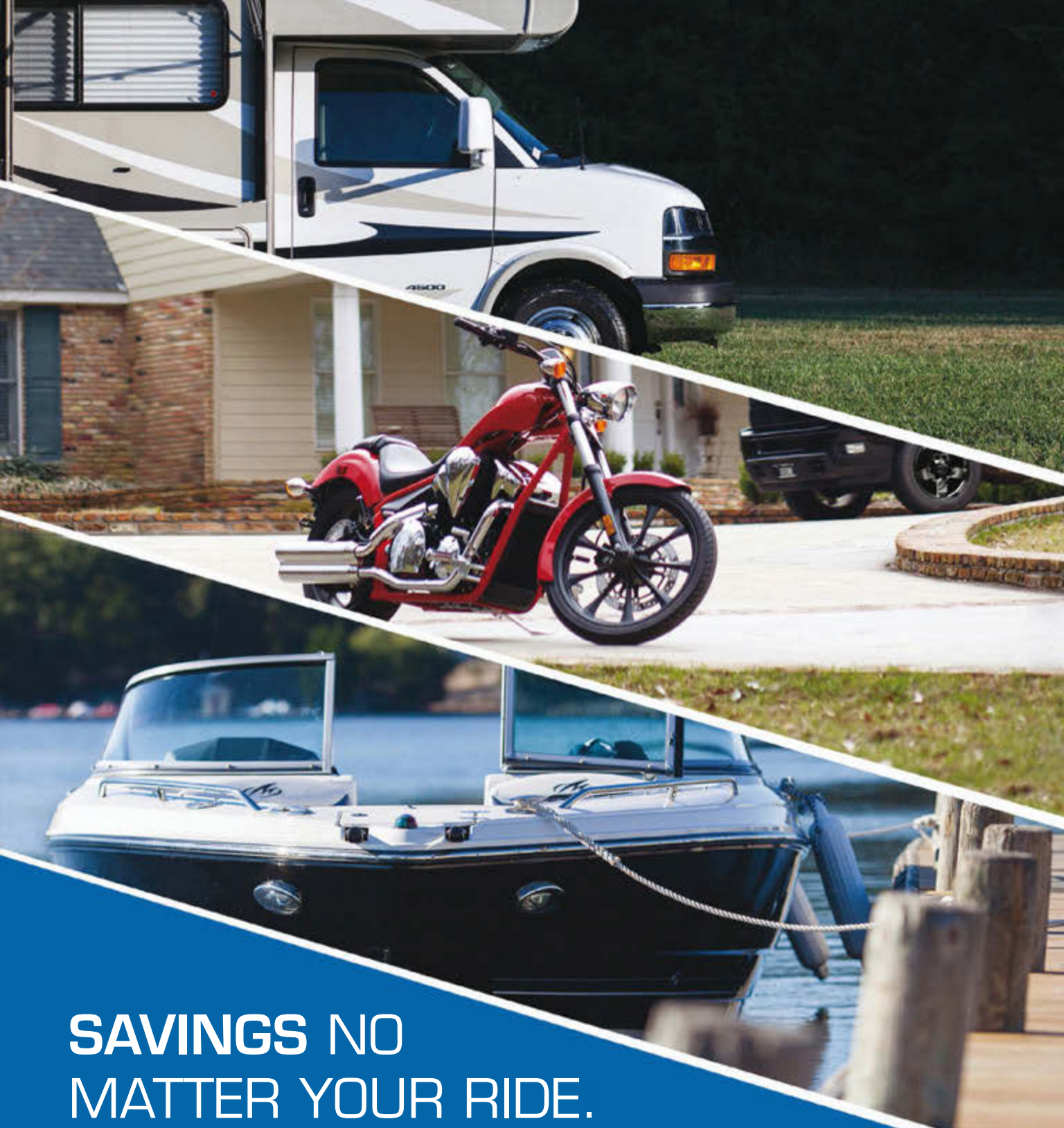
BAUME & MERCIER CAPELAND SHELBY COBRA STEEL CHRONOGRAPH, \$4,450

To loosen up your look, leave the bottom button undone.



MITCH MANDEL (WATCH)





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Lose the tie and
plant a flower
that won't wilt
in the heat.



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JOHN VARVATOS SHIRT, \$268
MARK MCNAIRY SHOES, \$495
THE KNOTTERY LAPEL PIN, \$8
SAKS FIFTH AVENUE COLLECTION
BELT, \$128
BAUME & MERCIER WATCH, \$19,950

Illustrations by ANDREA MANZATI

DON'T BE AFRAID OF HEIGHT

BUILD A BETTER
SUIT FOR
YOUR STATURE.



THE JACKET

TALL Add substance to a tall frame with a double-breasted style. If you have a lean or athletic torso, flatter it with a vest, says Jin.

SHORT One- and two-button suits will elongate your torso. Steer clear of three buttons, says Jennings, which will only shorten it.



THE SHIRT

TALL Wrinkles, bulges, and excess cloth look sloppy. Choose a slim-fit style or a tailored shirt with just enough slack to let you twist your torso comfortably.

SHORT Stick to lighter hues and small, subtle patterns to enhance your frame. If you wear stripes, go vertical.



THE PANTS

TALL A straight leg is your best option. That's because a tapered fit will accentuate skinny legs, while baggy pants just look sloppy.

SHORT Pleats, cuffs, and wide trousers can make short legs look stocky. "Slim, tapered pants are more flattering," says Jennings.



First-Class Shaves—Delivered

Which of these razor subscription services is a cut above the rest?

BY SANDRA NYGAARD



	1/ DOLLAR SHAVE CLUB	2/ BEVEL	3/ HARRY'S
THE PITCH	A new razor and up to five cartridges monthly for less than you'd spend on a beer. For a few bucks more, you can upgrade to a four- or six-blade version as well as extras like shave butter and aftershave.	Grandpa may have been onto something: Old-school single blades leave sensitive skin less prone to bumps. You also get a badger-hair brush and a supply of shaving cream, priming oil, and restoring balm.	It's hard to find a weak spot among Harry's options. Its razors are built to last and aren't too flashy. The company puts an emphasis on aesthetics and owns the German factory where it designs and manufactures its blades.
PRICE RANGE	\$3 a month for five two-blade cartridges, up to \$30 for six-blade cartridges and all the extras.	\$30 a month for the blades, brush, oil, shaving cream, and balm.	\$3 a month for basic blades, up to \$19 if you want shaving gels and aftershave.
BEST FOR	Low-maintenance guys who like to keep their shaving routine as simple as possible.	Men with coarse, curly beard hair. Dark-skinned dudes, this club is for you.	Higher-maintenance guys who think scruff is for slackers.
WHY IT STANDS OUT	One reviewer cited the razor's durable grip and surprising heft. ("It felt more substantial than most razors I've used.") He was less impressed with Dollar Shave Club's add-ons, however, saying he'd stick to his regular store-bought shaving cream and aftershave.	If you have questions, Bevel will arrange one-on-one video calls with experts to provide advice. A "travel concierge" will also send blades wherever you're vacationing for no extra charge. "You can tell they're thinking of the small things," one user told us.	One reviewer appreciated the wide range of eye-catching colors and the understated, ergonomic design of the razor's handle—great for conveying a discerning eye for detail. He also thought the shaving gel included with his kit provided a refreshingly smooth glide.
USE IT IF	You're on a tight budget and using higher-end brand-name products isn't a big priority.	You're fighting a losing battle against shaving bumps and skin irritation.	You're looking for a durable, well-designed upgrade to your everyday blade.



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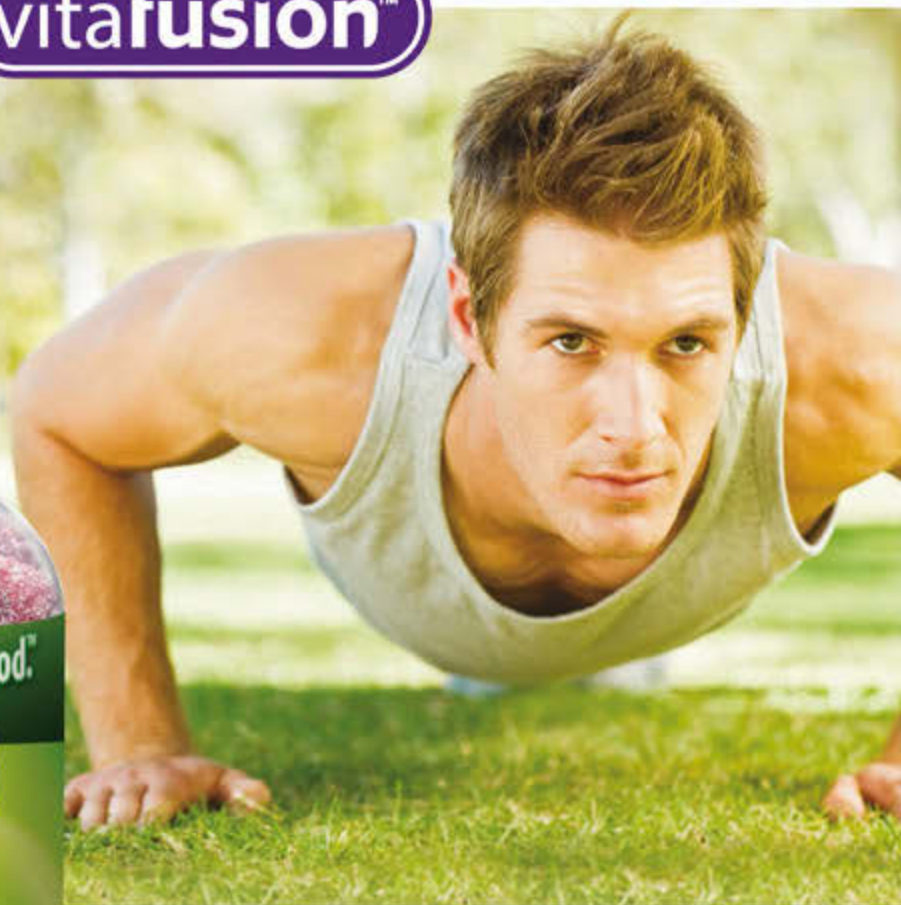
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8 Skin Cures at Your Fingertips

Afraid to get naked? Try our DIY guide to doctoring your dermis—no appointment (or anesthesia) necessary. BY DAVID McGLYNN



MEN CAN GET AWAY WITH VISIBLE SCARS. THEY'RE PROOF that you've lived an interesting life, taken risks, maybe lost a bet involving an alligator and a bottle of A.1. sauce. But warts? Those—and a roster of other body blemishes—don't come with a cool story. No man ever said "I got these liver spots from 20 years of skipping sunscreen. Gnarly, huh?"

Now, you could spend a ton of time and money to have a skin doc clean up your epidermal act. But a guy with guts—with scars—will grab whatever's handy and take care of his own damn warts! You are that guy, and this is your guide.

Ingrown Hairs

Give your face a brewed awakening. Used coffee grounds slough off skin, which allows facial hairs to sprout up through the follicles instead of burrowing below the surface, says Los Angeles dermatologist Annie Chiu, M.D. And because caffeine is a vasoconstrictor, it can help ease exfoliation-induced inflammation, she adds.

► **DIY** Mix a spoonful of cooled grounds with a dollop of facial moisturizer. Scrub your mug thoroughly and rinse with warm water. Repeat twice a week.



Skin Tags

Did you floss today? Not your teeth, but your skin tags, those dangling doohickies that are usually caused by skin-to-skin friction. Tying off a tag strangles the blood supply, says Martha Simpson, D.O., an associate professor of family medicine at Ohio University.

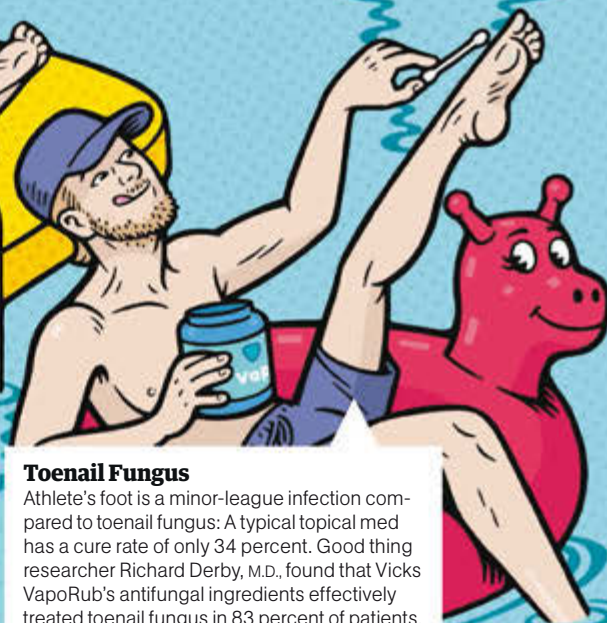
► **DIY** Tie several inches of floss tightly around the base of the growth. Snip off any excess floss and then cover the whole thing with a bandage. The tag should fall off in a few days.



Toenail Fungus

Athlete's foot is a minor-league infection compared to toenail fungus: A typical topical med has a cure rate of only 34 percent. Good thing researcher Richard Derby, M.D., found that Vicks VapoRub's antifungal ingredients effectively treated toenail fungus in 83 percent of patients.

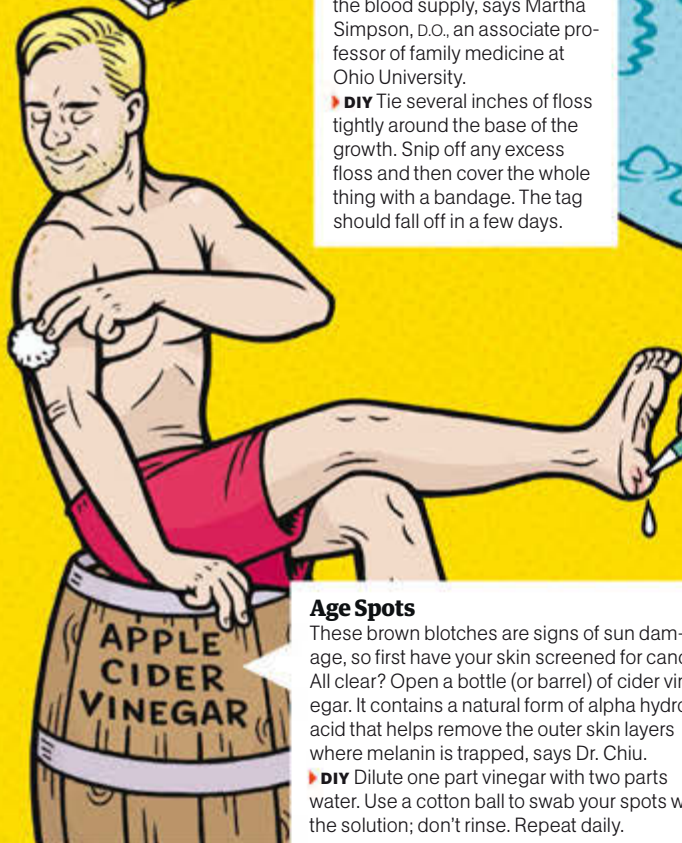
► **DIY** Apply a pea-sized amount to the nail and beneath its ridge daily. You may see results in a month, but it could take up to a year to cure it.



Age Spots

These brown blotches are signs of sun damage, so first have your skin screened for cancer. All clear? Open a bottle (or barrel) of cider vinegar. It contains a natural form of alpha hydroxy acid that helps remove the outer skin layers where melanin is trapped, says Dr. Chiu.

► **DIY** Dilute one part vinegar with two parts water. Use a cotton ball to swab your spots with the solution; don't rinse. Repeat daily.



Cracked Heels

Sandal season means your feet can finally breathe! They can also develop skin fissures! To avoid an ugly, painful infection, heal your heels with Super Glue. A University of Washington study found that the class of adhesives used in Super Glue, cyanoacrylates, was effective at sealing split skin.

► **DIY** Wash and dry your heels. Then apply two or three drops of glue along the length of each fissure. Hold the skin together for one minute, says Dr. Chiu.





Warts

You've used duct tape to fix everything else, so why not your bumps? When you MacGyver warts this way, it causes irritation that tells your immune system to attack the HPV virus fueling the growth, says *MH* dermatology advisor Adnan Nasir, M.D.

► **DIY** Apply a piece of gray duct tape that extends $\frac{1}{4}$ inch past the wart's edges. After six days remove the tape and soak the wart in warm water for 15 minutes. File it down with a pumice stone. Repeat for one month.

Sunburn

We know you aren't the fool at the pool who skips the sunscreen. But if you missed a spot, buy yogurt and chamomile tea. The yogurt's probiotics will help speed cellular renewal, while chamomile's anti-inflammatory properties can calm the burn, says Dr. Chiu.

► **DIY** Steep a tea bag in cold water for 15 minutes. Cut it open and mix the leaves with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of plain yogurt. Apply the mixture for 10 minutes, three times a day, until the sunburn subsides.

Under-Eye Bags

You can hide behind your sunglasses for only so long. A sleep deficit has caused the blood vessels beneath your orbs to dilate, leading to dark, puffy skin. To eliminate bags under your eyes, put tea bags on them: The tannins in black tea can slow bloodflow to the area and temporarily tighten your swollen skin, says Dr. Chiu.

► **DIY** Steep two tea bags in a cup of boiling water for two minutes. Cool them in the fridge and then place them on top of your closed eyes for five minutes. Do this a few times a week.



THEY GOT IT RIGHT

HOW PARIS AIRED OUT

This past spring—late March 2015, to be exact—the City of Light became Smog Central. Air pollution levels in Paris surpassed those of barely breathable Shanghai, prompting city officials to impose a one-day driving ban on non-hybrid cars with plates ending in even numbers. They also offered free public transit and residential parking. The net effect: Between the ban and incoming winds, pollution levels fell back to the global average. No car-loving American wants to be told when to park it, but staying off the road now could save you an ambulance ride later: Sucking in bad air raises your risk of heart disease and stroke, says George Thurston, Sc.D., an environmental medicine professor at NYU. No bus or train options? Carpool, and swap your car's cabin filter with an activated-carbon kind, like the MicronAir. It cuts particle pollution exposure by 27 percent, say scientists in Sweden.

—MELISSA ROMERO



The Hellish Din in My Head

Cranking the volume too loud for too long can hurt your hearing. It can also make you wish for a way to hear *less*. BY MICHAEL PERRY



I AM NO LOGGER (JUST ASK MY BROTHER THE LOGGER), but we heat our house with a woodstove, and I do like to run a chain saw. So I was happy in the forest a few months ago as I revved the engine, dropping trees and bucking them into firewood length for next winter. The snarling roar of the saw rose and fell, safely muffled by my hearing protectors.

Then the saw coughed, and died. Outta gas.

The forest fell silent. But my head? Not so much. The moment the engine noise ceased, my noggin filled with a high-tensile squeal. The sound seemed to pass through my

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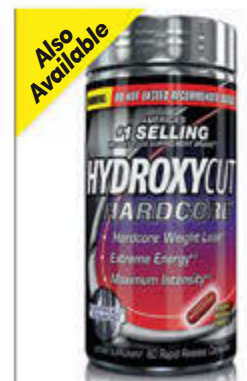
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brain, from ear to ear, like the thinnest steel guitar string drawn so taut that it seems about to snap—and yet never does.

As quickly as I could, I laid the saw down on the ground and shucked the earmuffs. The squeal didn't stop but it faded, and it no longer felt as if someone was shooting a laser beam through my skull.

M

MY CRANIUM USED TO BE quiet. Then 15 years ago, I pulled an all-nighter in a recording studio while wearing a pair of headphones cranked blisteringly high. When I stepped

outside at dawn, my ears were making Charlie Brown *wah-wah* sounds. Within 48 hours, the *wah-wah* stopped but a ringing sound remained. I was worried: Had I damaged my ears?

I made an appointment with an audiologist. Surprisingly, my hearing checked out fine, but the ringing wouldn't quit. "It's tinnitus," said the

audiologist. "Some people hear buzzing or chirping. It might just go away," she said. "Or not."

It did not go away. It kept me awake at night. The more I tried to ignore it, the more it bothered me. And it didn't just bother me—it made me feel ashamed and guilty. Like it was a signal broadcasting the same unceasing message: *You wrecked your ears, you idiot*. I was depressed. I couldn't sleep. Most of all, I felt dumb for being this upset about a sound.

I wanted help, so I started researching treatment options, contacting tinnitus experts, and learning everything I could about the affliction. When you begin delving into tinnitus, you quickly discover two camps: those who say *TIN-it-us*, and those who say *t'NIGHT-us*. And good luck getting even the experts to agree.

But however you pronounce it, the American Tinnitus Association says over 45 million Americans have the condition. Some 16 million find it bothersome enough to seek treatment, and 2 million report it to be extreme and sometimes so overwhelming that they can't func-

tion normally on a day-to-day basis. It's more common among men than women—perhaps because men are more likely to be employed in noisy jobs. Emergency service personnel, such as firefighters and medical responders, and members of the U.S. military—especially combat veterans—are at higher risk.

By the time I'd gathered all that information, several weeks had passed, and something odd had happened: My tinnitus no longer bothered me. Oh, it was still there, and I still didn't like it; but it had receded into the background. My depression and insomnia were gone.

Later—much later—I would discover that the timing of these changes was no coincidence.

But for the time being, I decided that I could probably live with my tinnitus.

BEFORE YOU TRY TO LIVE WITH TINNITUS, FIND out from your doctor if you even have to. "Most cases can't be treated with medicine or surgery," says James W. Hall III, Ph.D., a professor at the Osborne College of Audiology at Salus

Two irresistible flavors

I can't believe they're making a megastar like me do this.

Hey, I know those guys.



University in Pennsylvania, “but it’s always important to identify the few people who can be helped by a physician, because tinnitus might be a symptom of ear or neurological diseases that sometimes are very serious.”

He’s primarily talking about tumor-triggered tinnitus as well as the kind caused by cardiovascular disease. But the nonstop noise can also be brought on by Lyme disease, jaw misalignment, and ototoxicity, i.e., as a side effect of medications including aspirin and certain antibiotics. And you know the expression “I got my bell rung”? If it keeps ringing, get checked out for a concussion, as tinnitus is a common consequence of a bad bonk.

In most situations, however, tinnitus occurs as a result of damage to the ear from too much noise exposure for too long and too often.

But what’s funny about the condition (except to sufferers like myself) is that it truly is all in a person’s head. If someone could stick a microphone inside my skull, they wouldn’t hear the ringing. That’s because my brain, primarily the

auditory cortex, is generating only the *perception* of noise. In some cases, this is an attempt by the cortex to replace a frequency range that can no longer be detected due to damaged hearing. Researchers have identified some of the mechanisms underlying tinnitus perception, but unfortunately, just as often there’s no explanation for why it creates these phantom sounds. That’s why tinnitus is so difficult to treat, leaving those afflicted with few options and sometimes even less hope.

When Austin musician Mark Stancato wound up with a career-derailing case of tinnitus in 2013 and was told by two separate physicians that nothing could be done, he became so desperate that he considered suicide. “I remember driving home past this gun store and having visions of buying a gun, going home, writing a note, and putting the pistol to my head,” says Stancato.

Frightened, he sought help from a psychiatrist, who treated him with counseling and anti-anxiety medications. “Now I’m back at a place where it’s manageable,” says Stancato, who has

**“IT’S A VICTORY IF SOMEONE SAYS,
‘I STILL HAVE TINNITUS; I JUST
DON’T CARE ABOUT IT ANYMORE.’”**

since returned to performing. “Sometimes I can’t hear it at all.” But he says he’ll never forget the time he was begging an otolaryngologist for help, and the doc replied, “Well, tinnitus never killed anybody.”

“That isn’t true,” says Stancato, and he’s right: He got out alive, but a 2014 report by the American Academy of Otolaryngology cites suicide as a special concern when tinnitus is accompanied by psychological issues.

RECENTLY I NOTICED THAT MY TINNITUS seemed to have cranked up again. I had taken to using little tricks to keep it at bay—placing my smartphone beneath my pillow at night to

under 200 calories.

I don't like the way people are looking at us.



I better be getting paid overtime for this.

play white-noise apps, or sleeping with a fan running—anything to drown out the ringing. But in quiet moments it felt more pervasive, and if I popped in earplugs, it was disturbingly distracting. Now and then—especially if I was anxious or depressed—the ringing would increase, and behind it I'd hear that voice from way back: *Your ears...they're getting worse...*

I recalled my first go-round with tinnitus, and how the more I learned about it—the more I faced it—the less it troubled me. And I realized that it was time to stare it down again.

I went to NYU Langone Medical Center for testing. During the exam, audiologist Theresa Shaw, Au.D., filled my headphones with beeps, hisses, and high-frequency squeals. The verdict? “Your hearing is actually quite good,” said Dr. Shaw. Whether or not my tinnitus had gotten worse was more difficult to tell, but she said that was beside the point.

“Whether the sound you are hearing is measurable in an objective way is essentially irrelevant in terms of treatment,” said Dr. Shaw. “Your body is experiencing it. Your body and your mind. There is a link between tinnitus and the limbic system, hooking us into that fight-or-flight response. And then it's the chicken or the egg...the tinnitus may exacerbate the fight-or-flight response, the fight-or-flight response creates more of a focus on tinnitus, and so on.”

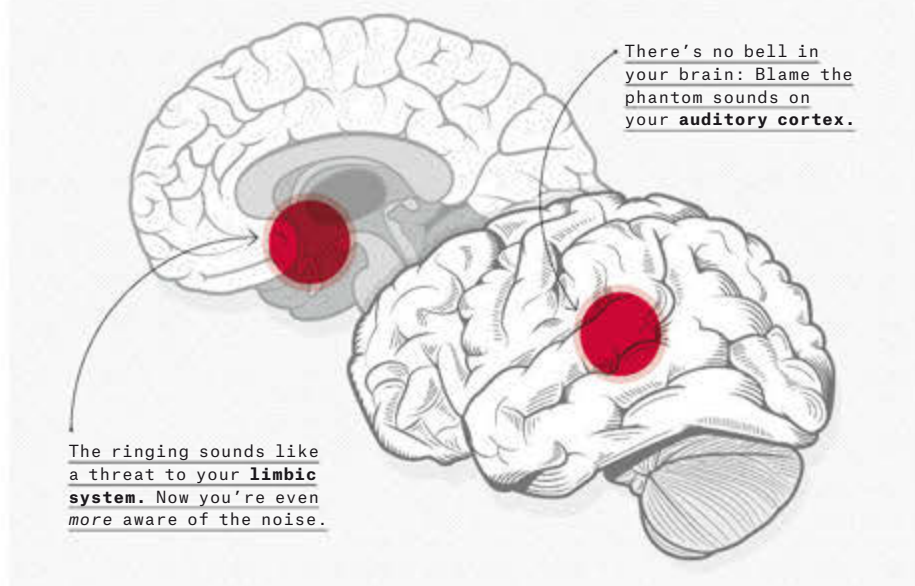
Even among experts, there is no universal endorsement of any one best way to disrupt the cycle. Some people find relief through simple interventions like hearing aids or sound generators. A rare few others require something more drastic, like cochlear implants that provide electrical stimulation to the auditory nerves. Some experience relief using alternative treatments like ginkgo biloba or acupuncture. But most experts agree that tinnitus should be treated using a three-pronged approach: audiological, neurological, and psychological.

Audiological treatment includes assessing and treating any hearing loss. The neurological component involves the use of sound to either distract from the tinnitus or retrain the brain into perceiving the tinnitus as diminished. The psychological component focuses not on eliminating the tinnitus but on reducing the reaction to it, as well as not compulsively focusing on it.

“When a patient tells me, ‘I still have tinnitus; I just don't care about it anymore,’ that's a victory,” said Shaw.

ANATOMY OF AN AURAL FIXATION

MAPPING THE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF TINNITUS.



A

A WEEK LATER, I ATTENDED a two-day yoga and meditation retreat with my wife. While she has been studying, practicing, and teaching yoga for years, I wouldn't know a downward

dog from an upward squirrel. My morning meditation routine consists of tapping my foot impatiently as the coffee beans grind.

The retreat began with an introductory lecture from a yogi, and then we closed our eyes as he led us into our first meditation.

“We must find ourselves before we can fix ourselves,” the yogi said. I rolled my closed eyes but resolved to give it a try. The room was silent. Too silent, because with no background noise, my tinnitus took over, whining its way into my consciousness, crowding everything else out. I tried to ignore it and—assuming meditation requires soft, beautiful things—conjured up a flower.

The tinnitus laser beam incinerated it.

The yogi spoke, softly. “Whatever enters your consciousness can be the focus.”

Whatever that means, I thought. The tinnitus came zinging back, like a stainless-steel bee.

The yogi spoke again: “Meditation is not about blocking every distraction but rather choosing one distraction and examining it.”

And right then I stopped my snarky inner monologue. Rather than trying to ignore the tinnitus, or push it away, or distract myself, I homed right in on it. Tried to hear every note of it. Tried to imagine what it would look like on an oscilloscope. Gave it my deepest attention, as if it were the most beautiful song ever played.

And something weird happened: The tinnitus faded, like someone turned down the volume.

MY WIFE AND THE YOGI MAY HAVE LED ME TO the future of tinnitus treatment. In a Duke University study, patients who were extremely handicapped by their tinnitus reported relief after adding therapies like meditation to standard treatments. And a 2015 UC San Francisco pilot study found that patients experienced a clinically significant decrease in the perceived annoyance and perception of tinnitus after attending a mindfulness-based meditation program. They had focused on their tinnitus with “curiosity” rather than trying to banish it.

None of these researchers are claiming cure, though I wish they were. I'd love to drift off to sleep to the sound of silence rather than the sound of whatever's playing under my pillow. I'd love to kill the chain saw and hear nothing but...nothing. No, my tinnitus (I'm a *TIN-it-us* guy, by the way) is here to stay. But the more I meditate on it—as opposed to obsessing—the more I hear the ringing for just what it is: the perfect shrieking path to inner peace. ■



▶ THE NOISE OF SUMMER

Before you fire up any gas-powered yard equipment, don hearing protectors with an NRR (noise reduction rating) of 20 decibels or higher that sit flush around your ears. And no ball cap underneath! The extra material can compromise the seal, says William J. Murphy, Ph.D., a physicist at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

INSIDEOUT EVENTS & PROMOTIONS

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She's Hot. Are You Ready?

The season of flings has begun. Turn up the heat on every hookup with these irresistible approaches. BY ANNA MALTBY



PUT BIKINIS, BEACHES, AND BARE CHESTS TOGETHER IN hundred-degree heat, and what happens next is no surprise. In fact, people living in warmer climates report greater sexual activity, according to a recent Trojan survey. And a study published in *Archives of Sexual Behavior* notes that X-rated search terms tend to spike in early summer. You can capitalize on that libido surge: "Summer means more opportunities to meet women who want to meet you," says Christie Hartman, Ph.D., a behavioral scientist and the author of *Changing Your Game*. Allow us to make a few introductions.

"I GO TO LOADS OF SHOWS ALONE AND WILL SEE GUYS MAKING EYES AT ME ALL NIGHT, BUT THEY RARELY EVER APPROACH," SAYS LEAH, 29.



The Surfer

READ HER MIND It's not just the killer abs and toned legs she's achieved from performing her daily balancing act. "It's the independence. Plus, a woman who's having fun is naturally attractive," says Alana Blanchard, 25, a professional surfer and swimwear model from Hawaii. Dedication and self-assurance are bonuses. "She's sporty and has the confidence to go into a male-dominated setting," says sociologist Jennifer Gunsaulus, Ph.D., author of the blog *Dr. Jenn's Den*.

► **SHOOT THE CURL** Respect her athleticism. Ask simple questions—"How are the waves today?" "What's your favorite surfing spot?" Then let her talk—unless she doesn't want to. "Surfing is a selfish sport, so be prepared for her to do her own thing," Blanchard says. If she's in no mood to chat, just find your own adventure—while staying out of her way. Women consider men who take on primal challenges to be more attractive, a University of Alaska study found.



The Bridesmaid

READ HER MIND After all the primping, photo shoots, and crisis management, she's finally ready to party. "It's kind of like going to Vegas—we allow ourselves to act crazier," Gunsaulus says. Better yet, she may have already heard that you're a stand-up guy: "She's probably been wrangled into gossiping about eligible guests," says Eimear Lynch, who interviewed hundreds of wedding party regulars for her 2014 tell-all book *The Bridesmaids*.

► **JUST "I DO" HER** Lots of men go generic at weddings; you don't have to. Stand out with a non-officey shirt color, suggests *Men's Health* executive fashion and grooming director Brian Boyé. "For weddings, pink, yellow, or lavender are going to work more to your advantage than a basic white button-down. These colors indicate to women that you have a romantic side and are not afraid to show it," Boyé says. Smaller colorful details, like socks or a pocket square, can do the trick too.



Join her for a dance; stay for the encore.



The Festival Fan

READ HER MIND She's wearing a crop top that would make Rihanna blush. And consider this: If you've both emptied your savings on VIP passes, you're showing strong signs of compatibility, Gunsaulus says. "Your interests reflect your tastes, values, and how you want to spend your time. The way you prioritize spending money or time is a big issue in a lot of relationships. So if you both connect on prioritizing experiences over things, that's a plus."

► **JOIN HER PLAYLIST** Show patience. Wait for the set break to

go over to her—that way you won't interrupt her groove. More important, you'll find out if she's waiting on some guy. If she's free, try not to worry that you're the 10th dude to hit on her tonight. Instead, make your move with confidence—and watch her body language. "I go to loads of shows alone and will see guys making eyes at me all night, but they rarely ever approach," says Leah, 29. "If I'm into it, I'll throw some glances his way, play with my hair, keep my body language open." But if she seems distracted or fiddles with her phone, Gunsaulus says, it's likely time to book new talent.



The Gym Goddess

READ HER MIND She's crushing it at six in the morning—and her burpees put yours to shame. "Women who exercise take charge of their well-being, so they're healthier long-term mates," says Paul Hokemeyer, Ph.D., a marriage and family therapist. But they tend to look for the same in you: "Our clients are strong and fit, and they want to be around men who feel the same way about staying in shape," says Tish Arana, who manages a boot-camp class with her husband in L.A. And we'll just leave you with this: Exercise can increase

a woman's genital arousal, according to a study published in the *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*.

► **SWEAT HER OUT** Time it right: Don't ask her for coffee when she's banging out kettlebell swings; you'll ruin her shot at a PR and miss out on some fortuitous endocrinology. "Go up to her after the class is over," Hokemeyer says. "Vigorous exercise releases hormones that make people happy and open to others. Chemicals in your sweat even act as an aphrodisiac." Try a practical icebreaker: Arana recalls the time her now-husband gave her advice on how to work more protein into her diet.



Make a few waves
before you make
your move.



ARE YOU A PERV?

LET *MH* SEX ADVISOR DEBBY HERBENICK, Ph.D., M.P.H., MAKE THE CALL.

I'm turned on by the idea of giving her a "facial."

JEFF, BOSTON, MA

You probably just watch a lot of porn, where facials are more common than hugs. But if that's what you're into—and you aren't coercing or guilt-tripping her into the act—it can be as healthy as many forms of role play. Keep in mind that lots of women consider facials to be highly degrading, not to mention messy. So if she's not into it, don't even try. And if she agrees? Avoid the eyes.

I like to flash strangers my junk on Chatroulette.

RICK, MEMPHIS, TN

When you start unzipping for anyone other than an audience of consenting adults, then yes; you're being a perv. Flashing anything other than a smile is against the rules on Chatroulette, so it's also not cool. If horrifying strangers is what gets you off, you're no different than a trench coat flasher in Central Park. Find a place where your junk is welcome—like one of the hundreds of cam sites out there made for this purpose. May I suggest starting with DirtyRoulette?



The Outdoor Luncher

READ HER MIND There's something refreshing about someone who doesn't feel pressured to rush back to her desk. It suggests she's able to enjoy little pleasures, Gunsauillus says. If she's alone, that choice conveys confidence, independence, and an appreciation for solo time, Gunsauillus says. And if she's with friends, it's a sign that

she's social. "If you approach her group, she may be impressed with your boldness," Hokemeyer says. "Women are drawn to assertive men. It's a turn-on to be around a guy who takes charge in and out of the bedroom—and she may be flattered that you've singled her out."

► **BRING DESSERT** Read her signs: If she has her nose buried in *The Hunger Games*, it's no time to wax poetic about the mocking-

jay, Gunsauillus says. "After a day at the office, I don't want anyone bothering me during my downtime," says Andi, 29. But if she's looking around the park with a relaxed smile, she may be open to small talk. Just wait until she's wrapping up her meal, Gunsauillus says, and then keep things light. Assume that she probably has a job to get back to, so the sooner you ask for her number, the better.



The Superfan

READ HER MIND One word: passion. "When I'm watching the game, I'm genuinely into it," says Marissa, 30, a lifelong Packers fan. "I wear the real gear—not that bedazzled pink stuff from Victoria's Secret. I pay attention. I yell at the players." And just in case you were wondering, it's true: That intensity might just translate to the bedroom, Hokemeyer says. "Part of the reason why avid female sports fans strike us as smoldering hot is that they're so enthusiastic. Her ability to get fired up by brute strength, honed tech-

nique, and physical contact could demonstrate more of an openness to sexual experiences."

► **CHEER HER ON** Treat her as an equal, says Hokemeyer. "Never demean her for being loyal to a team. Saying 'You're a fool for liking the Yankees' will only piss her off and shut down the conversation." Get this through your helmet too: Baseball fans aren't just guys who look like Joe Maddon. Most sports boast a female fan base of 30 to 40 percent, according to research giant Nielsen. "Men marvel at the fact that I love sports, and that's so stupid and sexist," Marissa says.

"FEMALE SPORTS FANS STRIKE US AS SMOLDERING HOT BECAUSE THEY'RE SO ENTHUSIASTIC. THEIR ABILITY TO GET FIRED UP BY BRUTE STRENGTH AND PHYSICAL CONTACT COULD DEMONSTRATE AN OPENNESS TO SEXUAL EXPERIENCES."

6 Things You Should Never Say to a Gay Man

We asked one gay writer to address our misguided inquiries—so we can all just move on.

BY RICH JUZWIAK



DAMN STRAIGHT
Agents of change
don't talk like Ari
from *Entourage*.

“So wait, which one of you is the man in the relationship?”

Prepare to have your mind blown: We both are! In fairness, when straight guys ask this question—and as a gay man who covers LGBT issues for Gawker, I get it a lot—they’re usually curious about our sexual roles. But it’s not so simple. About 40 percent of gay guys are versatile—each one is, to some degree, a “bottom” and a “top,” according to a 2010 *Archives of Sexual Behavior* study. That’s not always the easiest idea for people to accept. A 2013 Yale Law School survey, for instance, reported a strong distaste among heterosexuals when it comes to gay men switching roles. So if that sounds like TMI, just don’t ask.

“Must be nice to hook up with anyone, anytime you want.”

It sure is—for *some* of us. After all, in a widely quoted 2010 study in *AIDS Care*, about half of the 566 Bay Area gay male couples surveyed had some sort of nonmonogamous arrangement. But that may not apply to all age groups, says Brian Mustanski, Ph.D., an associate professor of medical social sciences at Northwestern University. In a

recent study, Mustanski found that many young gay men intended to have an exclusive relationship. Turns out, plenty of gay people are just as capable of being content and boring in their relationships as most straight folks are.

“I bet you’d be really into my friend Josh—he’s gay.”

This sits near the top of a long list of unsafe assumptions. (Another: thinking we want to screw you.) Truth is, there are a lot of gay guys out there, and we don’t need help finding them. A 2012 Gallup survey of more than 200,000 people found that between 2 and 10 percent of people in a given state or the District of Columbia identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. (D.C. and Hawaii led the list.) The app Grindr has a reported 2.7 million users in the United States alone. That’s not to mention guys on Tinder, in gay bars, in gyms, in bookstores, at funerals, in the Home Depot, at the DMV, in the rain, in the dark, on a train, and, well, you get the idea.

“Are you sure you’re gay? You haven’t been with a woman.”

Many gay guys I know had, in fact, been with a woman at least once

before they came out. Others identified their sexuality well before that ever happened. I’m pretty sure there’s no lingering desire to find out what they’ve been “missing.” And yet: “Some straight men see gayness as a rejection of what they accept to be the norm,” says sociologist Peter Robinson, Ph.D., the author of *Gay Men’s Relationships Across the Life Course*. “But many gay men I’ve interviewed have had no sexual experience with women and are content with that.” It’s a persistent double standard: having to prove our sexuality to those who don’t understand it. If you’re tempted to ask, think to yourself, *I’ve never slept with a man; how can I be sure I’m straight?* Well?

“Wow, I had no idea. You just don’t seem that gay...”

What seems gay? Eyeliner? Limp wrists? Rainbows that fly out of a man’s mouth when he speaks? The only way you can be sure just by looking at him is if he’s having sex with another man in front of you. (And even then he might be bi, bicurious, or just bored.) But some stereotypes are deeply ingrained: that we’re uberextroverted, less masculine, politically far-left, and

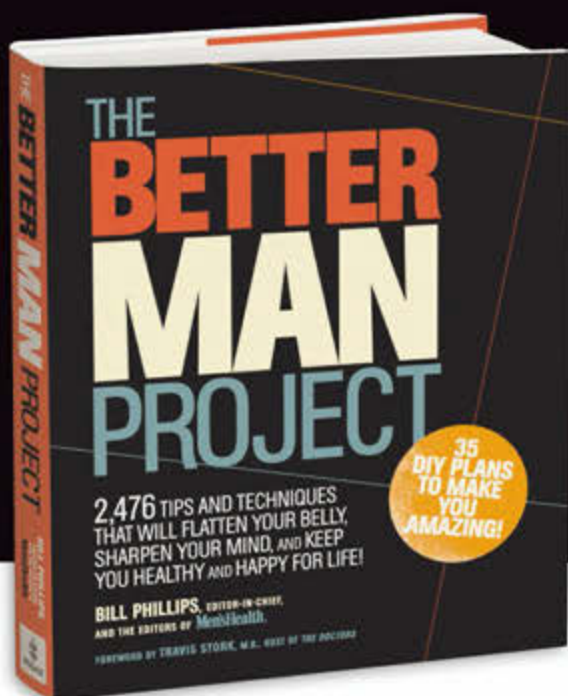
always in the gym, notes Jody M. Huckaby, executive director of the national division of Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). Thankfully, that representation is shifting—everyone from Michael Sam to Tim Cook to Matt Bomer to Neil Patrick Harris is proving there’s more than one way to look, act, or even “seem” gay.

“Hold on—how can you be a [fill in blank] if you’re gay?”

Pick an unlikely affiliation—religious, conservative, complete slob—and there’s a gay man who’ll make you rethink your assumptions. “The premise is that being gay excludes certain things,” says Andrew Sullivan, the author of *Virtually Normal*. “In my case, it’s being a Christian.” Sexual orientation is the one thing that binds us, says Huckaby. “There are countless attributes that distinguish us, separate us—with different cultural connections to our race, ethnicity, politics, education, faith—that ensure that just like straight men, we are no better and no worse when it comes to having our opinions.” Okay, so we’re homosexual. Our interests are as heterogeneous as the next guy’s.

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THE GIRL NEXT DOOR

Sex, dating, love, and lust. Ali Fedotowsky will now take your questions.



My girlfriend loves PDA. I'd rather be discreet. What's the compromise?

JEFF, DETROIT, MI

Here's my take: Showing affection in public is a woman's way of saying "Back off" to the competition. Why? Maybe she feels iffy about your level of commitment. So convey in little ways that you're all hers. When you're out, hold her hand. When you're home, be passionate. Carve out 30 minutes to watch *Louie* together. Get it? The more intimacy you communicate, the less she'll need to make a show of it.

After four months of dating a woman, my friend is now engaged. Can I tell him it's a bad idea?

ROSS, SEATTLE, WA
I'll tell you what's a bad idea, Ross: opening your mouth to say anything other than "Congrats, man." When and how a person chooses to propose is a deeply personal decision, and your friend is going with his gut here. So let him. It's not like he'll call the whole thing off just because you objected. Besides, just because you didn't see it coming doesn't make it irresponsible. If he says they're ready, shake his hand and buy him a beer. Save your opinions for when it counts—like planning the bachelor party.

My wife can't stand my best friend. How do I fix this?

LARRY, NEW YORK, NY
You probably can't, but maybe you can manage the problem. Find out what it is about him that bugs her so much, and then limit the exposure accordingly. Is it the way he screams at the TV during Knicks games? Then watch sports at his place. Or you could try a more radical option: Sit down with her and talk it over. Be a good listener. Simply acknowledging that her feelings are legit could go a long way toward softening her disdain. Then you can gently defend your friend. Hey, your wife doesn't have to love the guy, but she will have to tolerate him.

She's all hurt when I won't dance at weddings. But trust me: I suck at it. What do I do?

NICK, CLEVELAND, OH
First, relax. Then do it! Nobody other than Jessica Biel expects to see Justin Timberlake out on the dance floor. If you want, YouTube how to do a two-step. Know what else works? Having the confidence to laugh at yourself. Wedding dancing is like karaoke—it's more about attitude than skill. So own your two left feet, drain that gin and tonic, and make your girl happy.

She wants me to delete photos of my exes on Facebook. That's extreme, right?

GEORGE, CHICAGO, IL
Surprise! I'm with you. If a man asked me to wipe out my albums, my first impulse would be to close the book on him. The next time she freaks about Facebook, tell her she's the only woman in your life and that these are merely memories. Odds are, all she really wants is reassurance that she's your first priority and that you're not pining for the past. Otherwise, you're left with two options: Back up your photos before you remove them from your page, or back away from that relationship.



Follow Ali on Facebook at [MHGirlNextDoor](#), and on Twitter at [@AliFedotowsky](#).

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What's Your Rush?

Many of the world's greatest dives, climbs, and paddles are just a short ride (or plane hop) from home. Stop making excuses and start seeking thrills. BY LILA BATTIS

MAYBE YOU PLAN TO SUMMIT KILIMANJARO one day, or dive the Great Barrier Reef. Excellent dreams, both. But if you hold on to them too tightly, they could be holding you back from life-changing exploits closer to home.

Fourteen percent of North America is protected wilderness, and the United States has the largest swath of temperate rain forest on the planet. If you're not exploring that, you're losing out on an untapped benefit: Researchers at the University of Essex, England, found that people who spend time in nature return to civilization happier and with higher self-esteem. "Being indoors glued to a computer creates an inflammatory stress response, which taxes your whole system," says Eva Selhub, M.D., author of *Your Health Destiny*. "Time in nature counteracts that. It turns off the response."

To spur you into action, we polled experts to find the most iconic outdoor spots in the nation. These are the locations foreigners flock to, but you have the privilege of visiting them without even updating your passport.

1

Hike on Ice/Grinnell Glacier Trail, Glacier National Park, MT

Since 1850, the number of glaciers within Glacier National Park has plummeted from 150 to 25, and the U.S. Geological Survey predicts that they may all be melted by 2030. Sad. But in the meantime, hike the 11 miles around Grinnell Glacier, the most magnificent of the bunch. “Even when your heart is pumping, you never lose sight of the fact that you’re seeing some of the most astounding views in the world,” says Gregory Miller, president of the American Hiking Society.

You’ll start in the forest, pass the glacial lake, and finish on a rocky path abutting the gritty white sheet of ice itself. Count on seeing waterfalls, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, and possibly moose or elk. (Oh, and pack some bear spray. It’s griz country.)

Sections of the trail are closed into June but fully accessible by late July, says local guide Corrie Holloway. Nearby hotels are available, but camping is more fun. If you need help in the backcountry, Swan Mountain Outfitters will set up and stock your camp. \$275 and up, swanmountainoutfitters.com



BARGAIN

SENSIBLE

SPLURGE

A few days of this
can undo years of
workplace stress.



2

Raft the Rapids/Colorado River, Grand Canyon, AZ

“The Grand Canyon is really the whole package,” says Mark Singleton, executive director of American Whitewater, a nonprofit group that promotes river conservation. “Sure, there’s whitewater, but there’s also hiking, camping, and paddling.” And nights in the canyon can rock your world. “You stop at a sandy beach and throw your sleeping bag out right on the spot,” he says. “Aside from the Milky Way above you, you don’t see another light for a hundred miles.”

Canyon trips can range from three-day motorboat outings to 18-day paddle-only excursions. Either way, look for routes that include the lower stretch of the canyon—starting around Phantom Ranch and heading 150 to 200 miles downstream. That’s where you’ll find the best whitewater. A guided trip (you want that) runs about \$300 per person per day and is money well spent: The guide provides permits, navigational skills, geologic knowledge, and the culinary expertise to whip up French toast in the wild. Check out Advantage Grand Canyon (advantagegrandcanyon.com) to book an expedition that meets your definition of “grand.”

Previous page: Daniel Sohmer; this page, from left: Ian Shive/TandemStock, Andrew Peacock/Gallery Stock



3

Swim with Monsters/ Manta Village and Manta Heaven, Kona, HI

The U.S. coast is studded with stellar scuba settings—the Florida Keys, North Carolina’s Barrier Islands, Southern California. But for the most awe-inspiring marine life, don’t miss Hawaii’s Big Island, says Karl Shreeves, technical development executive at the Professional Association of Diving Instructors. “Kona is one of the most reliable dive spots for big marine animal sightings,” he says. “And almost a quarter of Hawaii’s fish species can’t be seen anywhere else on earth.”

Once you’ve strapped on the air tank, you’ll see dolphins, hammerheads, and tiger sharks.

But the premier sight is the giant manta rays, which slice through the water like bats with 16-foot wings. “There’s nothing else like them,” says Katie Key, operations manager at Kona Diving Company. The best time in the water, she says, is at night, when the mantas are chasing the plankton drawn to your dive lights. The catch? Only certified divers can enter after dark. So take a weekend class to earn a license before you travel. (Find one near you at nau.org.)

Many shops will take you to the manta site—it’s just 100 feet from land, after all—but Kona Diving Company makes sure you’re the last group to enter the water. That’ll give you some quality time with the winged beasts after all the other boats have returned to shore. *\$120 for a one-tank, 45-minute dive, plus \$30 to rent dive gear; konadivingcompany.com*

Four seconds that
might even be
better (and last
longer?) than sex.



4

Experience a Free-Fall/ Pacific Northwest Bridge, Amboy, WA

Most bungee operations are simply towers overlooking boardwalks, amusement parks, and tourists. What you want is the nation’s highest legal bridge jump: the Pacific Northwest Bridge, where you’ll start your fall nearly 200 feet above the Pacific Coast wilderness. “One second you’re talking to friends, and the next you’re stepping over the side of a bridge with only a rubber band to save you from the rocks and river,” says Casey Dale of Bungee.com, operator of the jump.

When you’re done, change your underwear, then hike the nearby Gifford Pinchot National Forest to take in views of Mount St. Helens. An hour south, toast your survival in one of the best beer towns ever, Portland. *\$140 for two free-falls*



You’ve probably
never been this
high before. Not
even in college.

5

Fly Like an Eagle/ Lookout Mountain Flight Park, Rising Fawn, GA

A drone with a GoPro? C’mon—you can do your own flying. With a weekend training package at Lookout Mountain, you’ll receive a hang-gliding lesson, 20 training flights from the 50- and 100-foot bunny slopes, and two half-hour tandem flights that send you soaring over the Smokies at 30 miles an hour. Distance from the ground:

nearly 4,000 feet. “Sometimes you can see seven states away, and the Smoky Mountains are just spread out before you,” says Matt Taber, the flight park’s owner and operator. “It’s the closest you’ll get to flying like a bird.”

Lookout is a perfect place to learn. “The wind off the mountain is consistent, but not so strong that it’s going to keep you grounded,” says Nick Greece, the editor of *Hang Gliding & Paragliding* magazine. And by the time you leave, you’ll be qualified to start flying solo from smaller jump sites. *\$400, hangglide.com*



6

Float the Wild/ Allagash Wilderness Waterway, Northern Forest Canoe Trail, ME

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway in Maine's most remote forest is spectacular enough to earn dual protection under both state and federal law—plus a spot on many seasoned paddlers' bucket lists. "It's the classic wilderness trip," says Peter Heed, president of the United States Canoe Association. "It has gorgeous lakes and rivers and a nice stretch of paddle-friendly whitewater."

That's not to say the waterway is easy—you're paddling through 93 miles of designated wilderness and the occasional stretch of class II rapids. But the effort will pay off: Eagle and moose sightings are common, and as you pass through the Tramway Carry you can visit the rusted shells of two abandoned early-1900s locomotives from the logging industry. Even better: "You can finish every day with freshly caught trout cooked over an open fire," says Walter Opuszynski, trail director for the Northern Forest Canoe Trail.

So pack your gear and plan on spending at least five days on the river. The Allagash can become crowded between July 4 and Labor Day, so arrive either before or after if you want the water to yourself, says Heed. To scout your route, go to northernforestcanoetrail.org. There you'll find extensive trail maps as well as a comprehensive catalog of the best outfitters, lodging, and shuttle services.



7

Conquer a Cliff/ Krogerata, Telluride, CO

So your climbing has been limited to indoor gyms? No problem. You can still score high-altitude thrills on Telluride's *via ferrata*, a rock-climbing route marked by iron rungs drilled into the mountainside. "Via ferratas provide an easier entry to the vertical environment," says Dale Remsberg, technical director of the American Mountain Guides Association. They started in Europe, but Telluride's is the closest thing this side of the Atlantic, he says.

The 4-mile round trip starts as you clip in on a narrow ledge overlooking a 200-foot drop. You'll cross it, take a break on an ass-wide rock shelf, and then pass the highest free-falling cascade in Colorado, 365-foot Bridal Veil Falls. For the final mile, you'll pick your way rung by rung across open rock face, stop for lunch, and then turn around and do it in reverse—very carefully.

Experienced climbers can brave the ferrata on their own, but if you're new to the sport, Telluride Adventures can lead you on a full- or half-day trip complete with gear, guide, and lunch. \$150 per person for a full-day, four-climber excursion; tellurideadventures.com

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Yo Ho Ho, and a Bottle of...

There are three styles of rum.
Find yours, drink, and repeat.

BEACHSIDE BARS LOVE RUM FOR ONE SIMPLE REASON: IT BLENDS PERFECTLY into cheap, sugary mixers. But if you think rum is only tolerable when it's cranked up to Bahama Mama-level sweetness, then you're missing out. Spanish, French, and English production methods create vastly different flavors, and the aged versions are often complex enough to sip neat. "Rum styles can be as different as cabernet and pinot grigio," says Jeff Berry, a rum historian and the author of *Potions of the Caribbean*. So guys, it's time to reintroduce yourself to rum. All three of them. —JOHN MCCARTHY



The Spaniard

CRUZAN ESTATE DIAMOND LIGHT, \$25

Ever heard of Bacardi? That's Spanish rum, the style you're probably most familiar with. Fermented from molasses in a column still, the spirit's hallmarks are clarity, dryness, and a taste neutral enough for mojitos and daiquiris. Lighter versions, such as the Cruzan above, can be as easy to mix as vodka. But if you prefer something that's closer to scotch, try an añejo (aged) Spanish rum—like the amber Flor de Caña Centenario 12 (\$50).

BURN YOUR DINNER

Rum is ideal for flambé, says Chris Shortall, executive chef at Latitude 29 in New Orleans. Put still-hot steak, scallops, or shrimp in a pan, pour on a shot of high-proof rum (like Don Q 151), and quickly light it with a long match. If you can avoid burning the guests, they'll be very impressed.



The Frenchy

RHUM J.M. V.S.O.P., \$63

Of course French rum is fancier and more expensive. It has a hoity-toity name too: *rum agricole*. What sets it apart is that it uses sugarcane as a base ingredient. When bottled young, rum agricole is as grassy as white tequila. But after a few years of rest in recharred bourbon barrels—and then, of course, French oak—it emerges more like cognac: rich and nutty, with rum's usual vanilla and caramel notes mostly stripped out.

SIMPLIFY YOUR COCKTAIL

Because it's so complex, French rum works best with simple mixers, says Berry. He recommends a refreshing Petit Punch, the official drink of Martinique. To make it, mix 2 ounces of rum, ¼ ounce fresh lime juice, and 1 teaspoon simple syrup in a glass with ice. Stir, drink, and feel fancy.



The Englishman

APPLETON ESTATE V/X, \$20

Like its Latino cousin, English-style rum is made from fermented molasses. The difference? Copper pot distillation. The resulting spirit pours out thicker and retains more of the complex molasses flavor. If you're a fan of Irish whiskey, this could be your rum. White and amber versions—like the Appleton Estate shown at left—are ideal for making punch, while the aged stuff, which is darker and more syrupy, makes for one hell of an after-dinner digestif.

BE A SPICE GUY

Make your own spiced rum, says Micaela Piccolo, bar manager at Distilled NYC. In a jar, mix a fifth of English rum with a long strip of orange peel (white part removed), split vanilla bean, cinnamon stick, slice of ginger, 3 allspice berries, 3 cloves, and 7 peppercorns. Let sit 3 days, then strain.

INSIDEOUT EVENTS & PROMOTIONS

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➡ Chris Pratt was once a fat guy. Now he does half Ironmans. You got a few pounds to lose? Follow his lead.



Lose Your BELLY, Gain The WORLD

BY Peter Flax / PHOTOGRAPHS BY Emily Shur / P. 119





Three minutes after I meet Chris Pratt, he's telling me about an anxiety dream he had the night before. We're on road bikes rolling along a woodsy stretch of tarmac in L.A.'s Griffith Park, and Pratt laughs when I ask if he's nervous about the triathlon he's doing with two former Navy

SEALs. The race is a half Ironman—he'll swim 1.2 miles, pedal 56, and run 13.1. "I feel confident about my training. But I dreamt that I showed up at the starting line without any cycling shoes or running clothes—I was wearing a pair of skinny jeans," he says. "I was like, 'What the fuck? I don't even have a shirt?' So I guess maybe I'm nervous."

Pratt, 36, is 6'2" and has the broad shoulders and thick muscles of a linebacker, but he's at ease spinning on his Cannondale racing bike, clad in full spandex and cleated cycling shoes. Though we're pushing into a headwind, Pratt drops into a bigger gear, and soon we're north of 20 mph, cruising past other riders along the Los Angeles River as the conversation picks up speed too. Pratt's life is moving pretty fast these days. After a decade during which breaks didn't come, he's now one of the most bankable stars in Hollywood. Supporting parts in *Parks and Recreation*, *The Lego Movie*, and *Her* led to starring roles in *Guardians of the Galaxy* and, this summer, *Jurassic World*.

As his body of work has become sharper, so has his physique. Pratt has been cast as characters of various sizes and strength levels ("It's all right; you can say that I've been fat," he says), but now he's truly committed to staying lean. As we roll toward downtown L.A., Pratt details just how hard he's trained for his triathlon—the early morning swims, the two-a-day workouts, the tedious runs. How he might have quit if he wasn't doing it with his buddy, Jared S., a SEAL he met while filming *Zero Dark Thirty*.

Pratt's been through plenty: He's been fat and he's been fit. He's ridden out highs and lows in his career. He's fought to find success in Hollywood without losing sight of his authentic self. And through it all, he's learned that when he takes care of his body, other important things have a way of taking care of themselves. "As an actor, I can't have proper mental prep without proper physical prep," he says. "Even though I knew it deep inside, it took me a long time to realize how getting physically sharp helps me get ready for other things in my life."

ABOUT TWO WEEKS LATER, PRATT IS CHURNING OUT LAPS before sunrise at a public pool in Santa Monica, the sky turning from dark gray to purple. His triathlon is only a week away, and he's here to knock out a mile and to practice "spotting"—the way triathletes lift their heads out of the water midstroke to stay on track during an open-water swim. He tells me afterward how much he's enjoyed immersing himself in swimming because of how quickly he's been able to improve and the near-endless opportunities to improve his technique. His freestyle stroke is quiet, controlled, powerful.

Pratt's own rise followed a course that was not quick or easy. He grew up in Lake Stevens, a city north of Seattle, where he was a standout high school wrestler and football player who also enjoyed performing in plays. His mom worked as a cashier at Safeway for decades (she recently retired), and his dad, who died in June 2014 after a long battle with multiple sclerosis, did construction. Pratt says that his formative life lessons—about tenacity, hard work, and humility—came from his father and coaches. Still, he graduated high school without a plan.

He and a few buddies wound up in Maui—many accounts of this phase of his life refer to him as "homeless." Pratt chuckles about that. "I mean, I lived in a van, but people seem to think the story is better if it was like I had a cardboard sign," he says. "We were surfing, fishing, drinking, smoking weed every day, working just enough to buy beer and food. I had no responsibilities, no address, and almost no possessions. The truth is it was fucking awesome, and we were having the time of our lives."

In a case of real life resembling a *Forrest Gump* parody, Pratt landed in Hollywood at age 19, after actor-director Rae Dawn Chong "discovered" him in Maui while he was waiting tables at Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. Since then he's been in L.A. ("I hate it here," says Pratt, who calls himself a redneck country boy.) What followed was a decade of solid work in TV and film that brought him more respect than fame. He tried out for some flashy leading roles—most notably for *Star Trek* and *Avatar*—and

HOW CHRIS
PRATT
LOST 150
POUNDS



1997/High School
Young Chris Pratt ran track, wrestled, and played on the football team. **WEIGHT: 205**



2009/Parks and Recreation Pratt plays funny guys heavy. (Not so funny: 295 in *Delivery Man*.) **WEIGHT: 205**



2011/Moneyball
He dropped 30 pounds by cutting calories and working out in a sweat suit. **WEIGHT: 220**



2012/Zero Dark Thirty After a comedy (more chub), he did 500 pushups a day and lost 50 pounds. **WEIGHT: 230**



2014/Guardians of the Galaxy Another funny role, then daily training and no alcohol. Net loss: 70. **WEIGHT: 225**





didn't get noticed. ("I bet those tapes never even made it to J.J. Abrams's and James Cameron's desks.") Today, Pratt realizes that he didn't look the part and didn't have the confidence. But at the time, he rationalized his shortcomings: "I just thought, 'I'm authentic, and there's a career for me here,'" he says. "I might not be a Marvel superhero, but I'm going to find work; I'm not going to be a waiter again, and that's freaking awesome."

Better opportunities came along, and Pratt's weight started yo-yoing depending on the role. After being told he was too heavy to play a former ballplayer in *Moneyball*, he used his old wrestling tricks to drop 30 pounds, and earned the gig. He put on serious heft for roles in *The Five-Year Engagement* and *Delivery Man*, and he discovered that his big body helped him find success on the television comedy *Parks and Recreation*. "I don't think the Andy character worked so well when he was fit—the fatter Andy was, the funnier he was," he says. "If I was gaining weight, my castmates would be like, 'Aw, Pratt, the burger truck's here!' and I'd hammer three or four cheeseburgers."

Though he was finding creative success and having fun—and was happily married (Pratt wed actress Anna Faris in 2009, after they'd met on the set of *Take Me Home Tonight*)—the excess pounds were taking a toll. "It nagged at me when I wasn't physically fit," he says. "It was just another thing on my to-do list that I wasn't capable of getting done."

Pratt decided to step off the roller coaster when he was at a screening of *Zero Dark Thirty*. He had been a chiseled 235 for that role but was "probably 280" by the time he saw his former self up on the screen. "I was like, 'I feel kind of shitty about myself right now,'" says Pratt. "I knew I had to get back on a path to becoming fit again, that I was going to make a splash when I walked into a room with a casting director from then on."

Tackling the triathlon has taught Pratt to pay attention to detail. After his pool workout, he grabs a towel and talks about the little things that have helped his swimming—like focusing on stroke length more than quick turnover. And how his SEAL training partners have made fitness more fun. A retired Navy SEAL named Mike Day, Jared's chief during his second deployment in Iraq, came up with the idea to do the triathlon. Day's life changed on April 6, 2007, during a raid of an al-Qaeda cell near Fallujah. He was knocked unconscious by a grenade after

being shot 27 times from less than 10 feet away. (Day says that 11 of those rounds were stopped by his body armor. So technically his body was hit by *only* 16 bullets.)

Once he was back home, Day turned his attention to helping other wounded vets. Now 44, Day set out to complete this triathlon to raise funds for a nonprofit wing of the Carrick Brain Center that delivers care to veterans with traumatic brain injuries. Jared, who was also on the 2007 raid, offered to compete in the triathlon to support his former chief and then texted Pratt to see if he wanted to take on the challenge too. "There was zero hesitation," recalls Jared. "Chris was like, 'Yeah, man, absolutely.'" Though they live 1,500 miles apart, they have been in nearly daily contact about their training. "That's the benefit of enlisting a friend to work out with you," says Pratt. "There's this feeling of accountability—it might otherwise seem easy to bow out of all this work, but Jared is the kind of friend that when you say you're going to do something, you do it."

AFTER OUR BIKE RIDE, PRATT AND I SHARE LUNCH in Griffith Park. He grabs a small cooler from his souped-up F-150 and we sit at a picnic table. Pratt pulls out a neatly portioned meal prepared by a nutritionist: a mound of brown rice, a pile of kale, cubes of grilled chicken, and a jug of water. "I have

to be really serious about my nutrition now," he says before expounding on which nut oils he puts in smoothies and riffing on digestive enzymes. He's about seven weeks away from filming *The Magnificent Seven*, a remake of the iconic western, with Denzel Washington. He wants to drop 20 pounds first. ("Cowboys are a little gaunt," he notes.) The triathlon regimen is a win-win. His plan is to keep up all the exercise and cut back on calories as the shoot date approaches.

Pratt admits he didn't realize that signing up for the triathlon would entail doing 10 long workouts a week. His wife, he says, "loves me very much, but this can be frustrating for her. Neither of us really knew what I was getting into." But he's also quick to add how much he enjoys the physical challenge. His SEAL training buddy, Jared, says, "Everyone thinks that Hollywood people can just get fit overnight or something, but working out with him, I've seen just how much he puts into it. Chris just attacks whatever he does." CONTINUED ON PAGE 151

**RAPID
RESPONSE:
CHRIS
PRATT**

Heroes

"Men and women who serve—police, firefighters, military—who put their asses on the line for the greater good."

What I Cook to Impress My Wife

"Breakfast sandwiches—my version of the Egg McMuffin."

Workout Anthem

"'Lose Yourself,' by Eminem."

Favorite Comedian

"Ryan Sickler."

Motto

"One step ahead of the game."

Website I recommend to friends

"theSkimm."

Summer Drink

"Cold American beer."

Speed School / Chris Pratt's Half Ironman Training Plan



Strengthen During his twice-weekly lifting sessions, Pratt focused on total-body exercises and core work, including circuits like the Prison 60: Do 60 pushups, 60 squats, and 60 situps. Then descend—50, 40, 30, 20, 10. On recovery days he did yoga.

Swim Pratt swam about three days a week for three months, doing two 2,000-yard workouts and an intervals day. Stretch your stroke to go faster: Count your strokes for a length, then try to reduce the number by 10 percent by extending your pull and glide.

Bike A strong rider, Pratt banged out three even-paced 25- to 50-mile rides a week. He also hit his local gym's spin class once a week for workouts that combined intervals and climbing, often doing back-to-back classes to build his stamina.

Run Pratt ran 3 or 4 times a week, doing steady 1- to 2-hour efforts. He also did intervals or hills once a week. SEALs use "chunking" to divide big obstacles into manageable parts: A half marathon isn't so daunting if you think of it as four 30-minute runs.

→ Sign up for the toughest race you'll ever love. With our expert training tips, you'll probably even survive it.

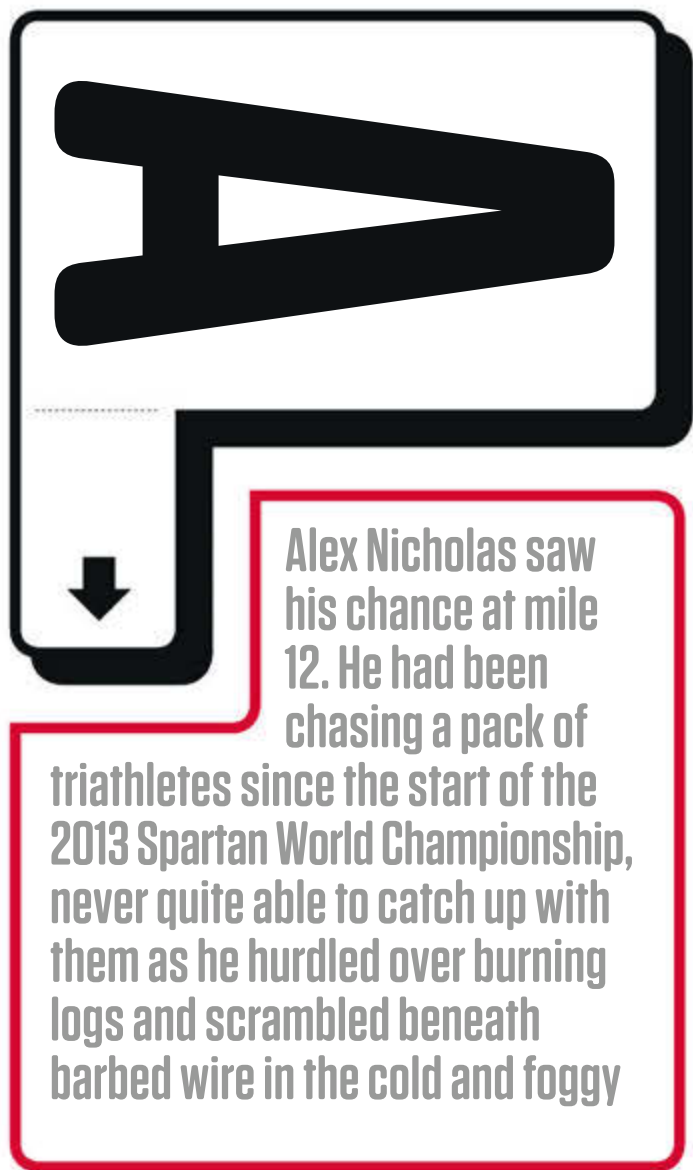


BY *Timothy Foley* / PHOTOGRAPHS BY *Giacomo Fortunato* / P.125



2015 Adventure Race Guide

Train, suffer, conquer



Alex Nicholas saw his chance at mile 12. He had been chasing a pack of

triathletes since the start of the 2013 Spartan World Championship, never quite able to catch up with them as he hurdled over burning logs and scrambled beneath barbed wire in the cold and foggy

Vermont countryside. Then, about a mile from the finish line, the triathletes began to falter on a wall of cargo netting.

"They looked like they were delirious with exhaustion as they began climbing," recalls Nicholas, the owner of Epic Hybrid Training in New York City. "They had the endurance but not the strength or stamina. I passed them and never looked back." He placed 30th in the event.

Nicholas, a veteran obstacle racer and winner of the 2014 New York City *Men's Health* Urbanathlon sprint course, is part of a growing legion of superfit men and women who are transforming obstacle racing from a fringe activity into one of the fastest-growing sports in the nation. According to a Running USA report, more than 4 million people competed in "nontraditional" races in 2013

alone—a 40-fold increase since 2009. It was also 1½ times the participation rate of all marathons and half marathons in 2013 combined.

"There's a reason obstacle races are so popular," says ultramarathoner and 2015 Urbanathlon host Dean Karnazes. "They're a lot more fun than a road race, and the camaraderie is just awesome." Indeed, for most racers, the events are less about competing and more about banding together with fellow racers to conquer 10-plus miles of muscle-burning hurdles. "What would you rather do—relentlessly pound the pavement, or mix it up by scaling walls and swinging across mud pits?" asks Karnazes. "The choice is easy, but the training is hard. It requires a different athleticism than most runners are used to." Read on to build the strength and stamina you'll need to cross the finish line.



TRAIN IN MULTIPLE GEARS

Make no mistake: An obstacle race is an endurance event, and you'll need a strong aerobic base to have any hope of finishing. So if you're not already a runner, your first job is to become one. "Devote at least one day a week to logging miles, preferably on a trail," says Joe DiStefano, c.s.c.s., Spartan Race's director of fitness and training. Still, he warns, "don't let that be all the cardiovascular training you do. A lack of a reliable aerobic foundation is one of the biggest deficits we see on the course."

You also need to develop speed endurance—the ability to sustain near-maximum effort for prolonged periods—which you can build with the 400-meter repeats described on the pullout in this article. "If you really want to test yourself, do mile repeats," says Rose Wetzel, c.s.c.s., a USA



ALL TOGETHER NOW
Participants share the burden at the 2015 Spartan Austin Super.

**OVERCOME
ANY
OBSTACLE**

Dean Karnazes, host of this year's MH Urbanathlon, provides 5 useful tips to help you run a stronger race.



Lace with Pull Tabs

Both mud and water reduce friction in your laces, increasing the odds that you'll lose a shoe. Pull tabs solve the problem by allowing you to tighten the laces with a simple tug.

Wash Your Hands

If you apply sunscreen (a smart move even when the sky is overcast), clean your hands before the race begins. Grip is critical in these events, and slick sunscreen undermines it.

Ease Off the Gas

Slow down about a football field's length from each obstacle. Sprinting into them keeps your heart rate high, increasing lactic acid buildup and robbing you of strength and power.

Do the Two-Step

When running down stadium steps, take two or three at a time, rotating left and right so your feet land sideways on the steps. You'll maintain stability, control, and speed.

Stop, Drop, and Roll

Roll sideways under cargo netting, barbed wire, and other low obstacles that require you to drop to the ground. It's what elite racers do, and it's faster than crawling.



TUG OF WAR
Trainers often include sled pulls in their prerace workouts. This is why.

Track & Field-certified coach and a member of the Spartan pro racing team. “They’ll show you how fit you are and help you build some serious grit.”

The benefits of interval training don’t stop there. In addition to conditioning your body to pour on speed when you need it most, intervals can also increase your VO_2 max (the amount of oxygen you can take in and process) and the den-

sity of capillaries in your muscles, according to a recent study from Finland. Come race time, that translates to more energy and stamina, and possibly a faster pace because of it. “You’ll notice the biggest performance boost going into and coming out of obstacles,” says Nicholas. “Improving your sprint capacity will help you gain a lot of ground in those transition points.”

DROP AND GIVE US 30

Unlike road races, obstacle courses require you to stop every mile or two to complete a total-body challenge. “Do the same when you train,” says Karnazes. “As with any sport, the more specificity you bring to your workouts, the better you’ll do.”

Every 5 to 10 minutes during a long run or ride, drop to the ground and crank out 30 burpees or 10 pushups. “That will help you build muscular stamina, allowing you to recover faster after climbing over a wall or scrambling out from under barbed wire,” says 14-time Spartan Race winner Matt Novakovich. “Always add strength challenges to your cardio. Always, always.”

There’s another advantage to hammering away at your burpee: Some obstacle races use it as a penalty for failing to complete an obstacle. “So

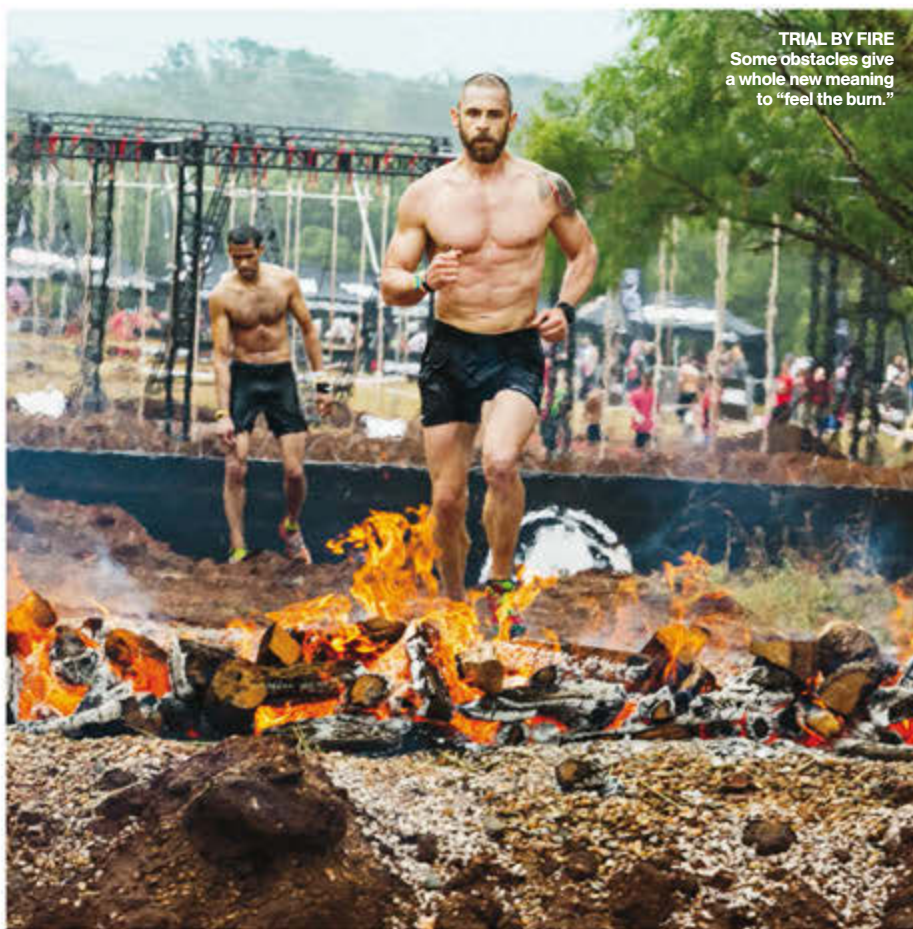
The 2015 Men’s Health Urbanathlon

Tackle up to 12 miles of grueling challenges in the original urban obstacle race. For competition details, online registration, and tons of expert training tips, visit MensHealthUrbanathlon.com.

► NEW YORK: OCTOBER 24, 2015 / ► SAN FRANCISCO: NOVEMBER 22, 2015



TRIAL BY FIRE
Some obstacles give
a whole new meaning
to “feel the burn.”



HOW TO avoid Heat- stroke

Pushing hard when it's hot can be dangerous. Stay chill with these easy strategies. **By Bob Parks**



the more efficient you become at it, the less of a penalty it will be,” says Karnazes. “Plus, sometimes it’s smarter to take the penalty on purpose if you think you can finish it faster than the obstacle.”

BUILD SURVIVAL STRENGTH

If you can’t pull your own weight, then you probably won’t make it to the finish line. “Failing to build upper-body strength is the biggest mistake people make coming into these races,” Karnazes says. “That goes for every level—a lot of distance runners can’t even do three pullups.”

Resistance training should comprise at least a third of your prerace prep. “But pumping iron is not enough. You need to challenge your body to operate outside of standard moves like the bench press, squat, and curl,” says Rich Borgatti, a

Spartan-certified trainer and the owner of Mountain Strength CrossFit. “Bear crawls, tire flips, rope climbs, sled pulls, and lunges—all of these build strength and carry over not only to obstacle races but also to the real world.”

Trainers call it functional strength. “You can also think about it as usable strength as opposed to gym strength or vanity strength, though you will still turn heads if you build it,” says Karnazes. “But more important, you’ll develop what I call whole-body excellence, which will boost your performance in everything you do.” Obstacle races and everyday life demand many of the same skills. “You’ve got to have mental agility, creativity, physical endurance, power, the ability to think on your feet, and a willingness to get down and dirty when the situation calls for it,” Karnazes says.

You should be exercising to torch the competition, not spontaneously combust. Tell that to the approximately 4,300 men who show up at emergency rooms each year with heat-related maladies. An athlete who’s too focused on chasing personal records may not listen to his body’s internal signals to slow down, says Col. Francis O’Connor, M.D., a professor of military and emergency medicine at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

As you exercise, your muscles generate metabolic heat that ramps up your core temperature. The trouble starts when you can’t cool down properly because of other factors—like intense activity, hot and humid weather, lack of proper hydration, or wearing the wrong gear. Once your temp reaches the 103° to 105°F range, you may experience headache, dizziness, nausea, lightheadedness, or extreme fatigue. Keep pushing, and you might suffer exertional heatstroke (i.e., you’ll become feverish and collapse), which could be life-threatening.

Before you end up in the ER, use these three strategies for keeping your cool at all times.

► CONTINUED ON P. 131

**RAISE
BIG
MONEY**

Fundraising is a key part of obstacle racing. Here are three ways to bring in maximum money.



Set an Example

As soon as you sign up for a charity race, make a donation. “It’s tip-jar logic,” says Allyson Brooks of Eventage, an event-planning company. People are more willing to donate if someone else has broken the ice, she says.



Work the Donors

Ask early and often; it can take as many as six requests to rouse a positive response, Brooks says. But soften them up through email first; then follow up in person. Your puppy-dog eyes will help close the donation deal.



Detail the Challenge

The tougher the race sounds, the more cash people donate. “It’s the martyrdom effect,” says Christopher Olivola, Ph.D., author of *The Science of Giving*. “People tend to donate significantly less if they think you’ll enjoy the race.”

Race Ready in 35 Days

Tear here
and get ripped!



DESIGNED BY
Joe DiStefano, C.S.C.S.,
director of fitness and
training at Spartan Race

BEST FOR
Building the upper-
body muscle, total-body
power, and endurance
needed to run an obsta-
cle race—or just be in
your best shape ever

EQUIPMENT
Chinup bar, kettlebell,
balloon

CALORIES BURNED
781*

TIME
52 minutes

*As measured by a fit 5'11", 175 lb man
using a Polar FT7 sports watch. Values
are for strength workout only.

DIRECTIONS

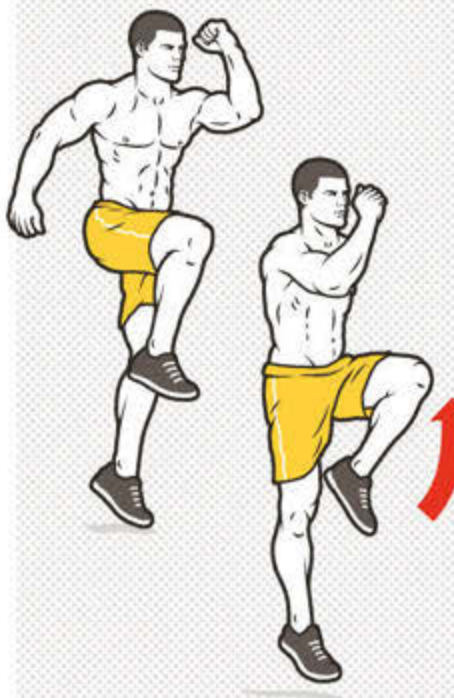
Alternate strength and cardio days, doing three of each workout (plus a rest day) per week for 5 weeks leading up to the race. On strength days, do the workout shown, starting with the warmup exercises. On cardio days, do the workout shown on the training calendar, starting with 10 minutes of light jogging. If you don't have a strong aerobic base, start logging miles for a month before beginning this program.

1

WARMUP

1/ Power Skip

Skip forward, propelling yourself as high as you can by driving your knee into the air. As you thrust each knee up, swing your opposite arm upward to get as much lift as possible. Do 20 skips (10 each leg).



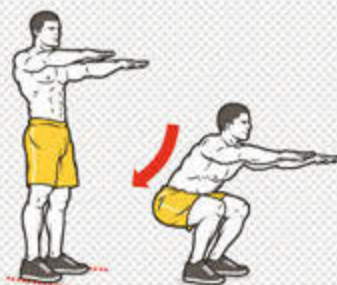
2/ Bear Crawl

Get on all fours with your hips up and your knees bent roughly 90 degrees. (Only your hands and toes should be touching the floor.) Crawl forward 40 feet and then backward 40 feet, moving your opposite hands and feet together (left hand and right foot, right hand and left foot).



3/ Body-Weight Squat

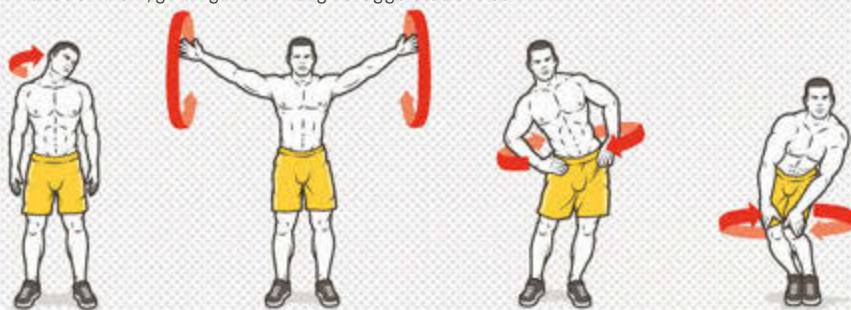
Stand as tall as you can, feet shoulder-width apart, and hold your arms straight out in front of your chest. Push your hips back and lower your body until your thighs are at least parallel to the floor. Drive back up to the starting position. Repeat as quickly as you can. Do 20 reps.



4/ Joint Circles

Perform 10 circles in each direction (clockwise and counterclockwise) for each of the following body parts without rest.

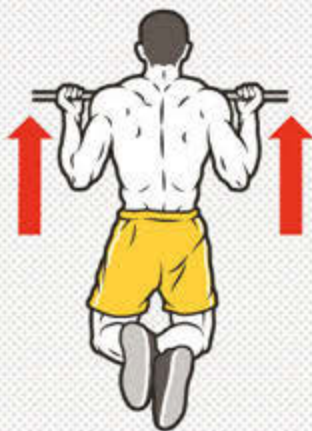
Neck: Tuck your chin and try to touch each ear to each shoulder as you roll your head. **Arms:** Hold them straight out to your sides, palms forward. Start with small circles and progress to larger ones. **Hips:** Place your hands on your hips, guiding them through exaggerated circles. **Knees:** Place your feet together so that your knees touch. Now bend your knees and place your hands on them, guiding them through exaggerated circles.



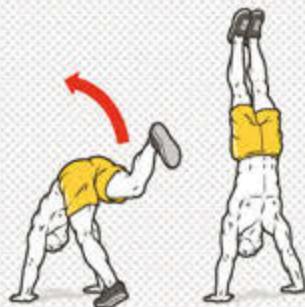
BEST
NEW
WORKOUT
Summer
2015

1/ Chinup

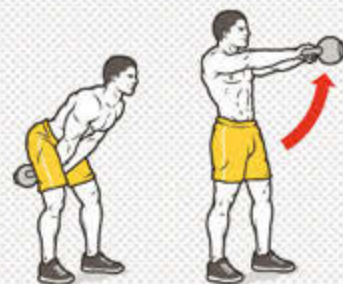
Grab a chinup bar using an underhand grip, and hang at arm's length. Pull your chest to the bar, pause, and slowly lower your body back to the starting position. Complete as many reps as you can in 10 minutes, resting as needed. If that's too hard, do a band-assisted chinup: Secure a resistance band to the bar, loop it around your knees, and then follow the instructions above for the chinup.

**2/ Handstand Hold**

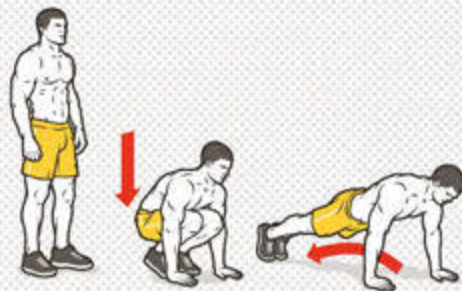
Place your hands on the floor 6 to 12 inches from a wall, fingers spread wide. Kick one leg at a time into a handstand. Hold as long as you can; rest 3 minutes. That's 1 set; do 3. During each rest period, lie on the floor and blow up a balloon three times, using as few breaths as possible (this will work your diaphragm, improving stability and power). If you can't hold a handstand, do a pike hold (feet on bench, hips raised high, hands on floor).

**3/ Kettlebell Swing**

Set a kettlebell on the floor, spread your feet just beyond shoulder width, and grab the handle with both hands. Swing it back between your legs, then up to chest level, then back between your legs. That's 1 rep; do 6. Set the bell down, do 3 broad jumps, and then bear-crawl for 90 seconds with a shoe on your back. (Note how many times it falls—you'll need that number for the next exercise.) Rest 90 seconds. Do this 5 times.

**4/ Burpee**

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Now push your hips back, lower your body as far as you can, and place your hands on the floor by your feet. Kick your legs back into a pushup position. Do a pushup (elbows tucked, body straight), and then bring your feet back to your hands and stand up. That's 1 rep. Do 10 reps for each time the shoe fell while you were bear-crawling between sets of the kettlebell swing.



**CARDIO PLAN:
WEEKS 1 AND 2**
THE FAST TRACK
TO MORE SPEED
AND STAMINA.

WEEK 1

DAY 1 / INTERVALS

2,400 m (6 laps)
for time.*

WEEK 2

1,600 m (4 laps) for time.
Walk 10 minutes; repeat.

DAY 2 / INTERVALS

6×400 m for time.
Walk 200 m
between intervals.

4×400 m as fast as
possible. Walk 200 m
between intervals.

DAY 3 / DISTANCE

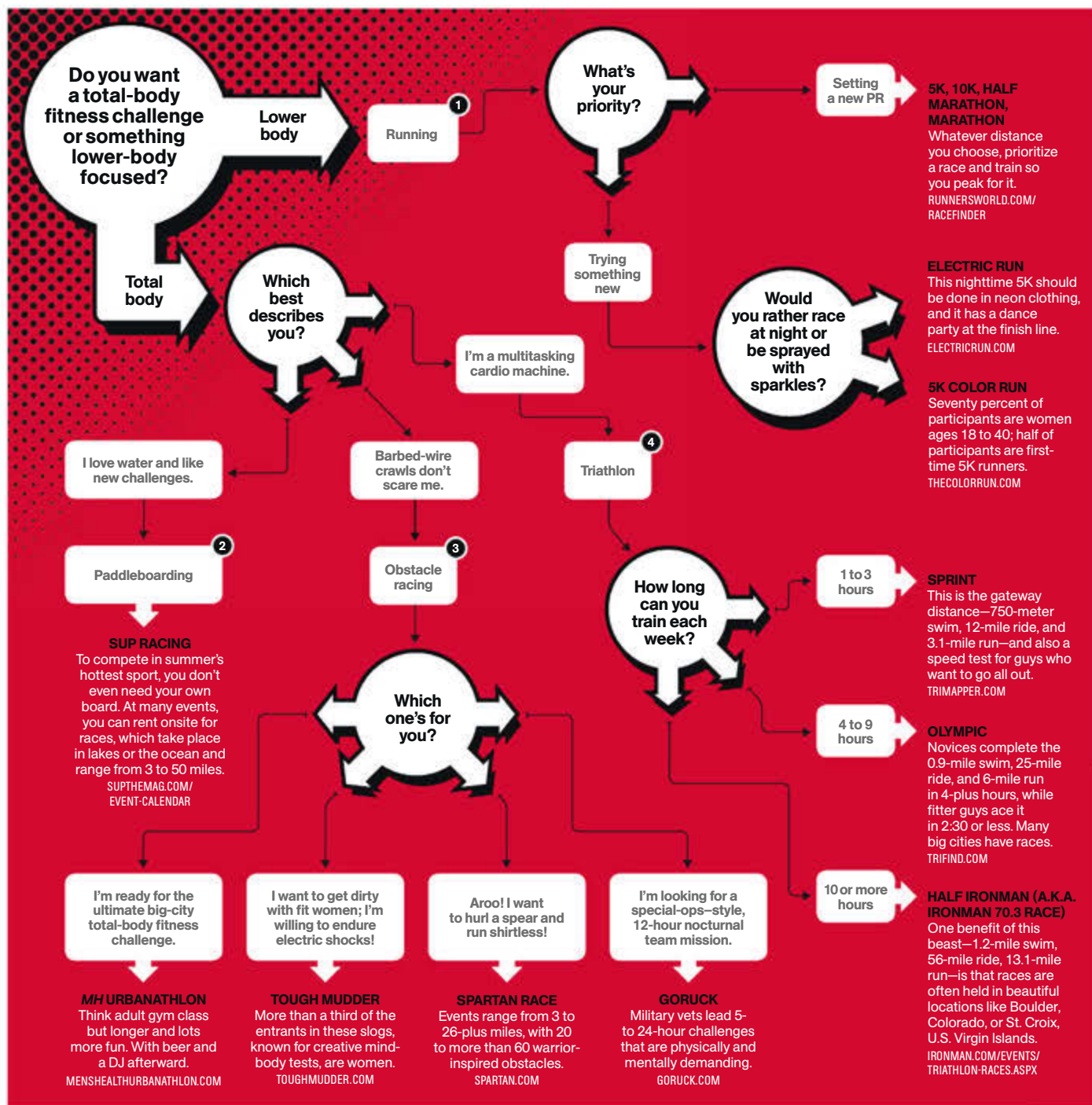
Trail run (or jogging path) for 90 minutes.
Every 10 minutes, stop and
do 10 walking lunges or burpees.

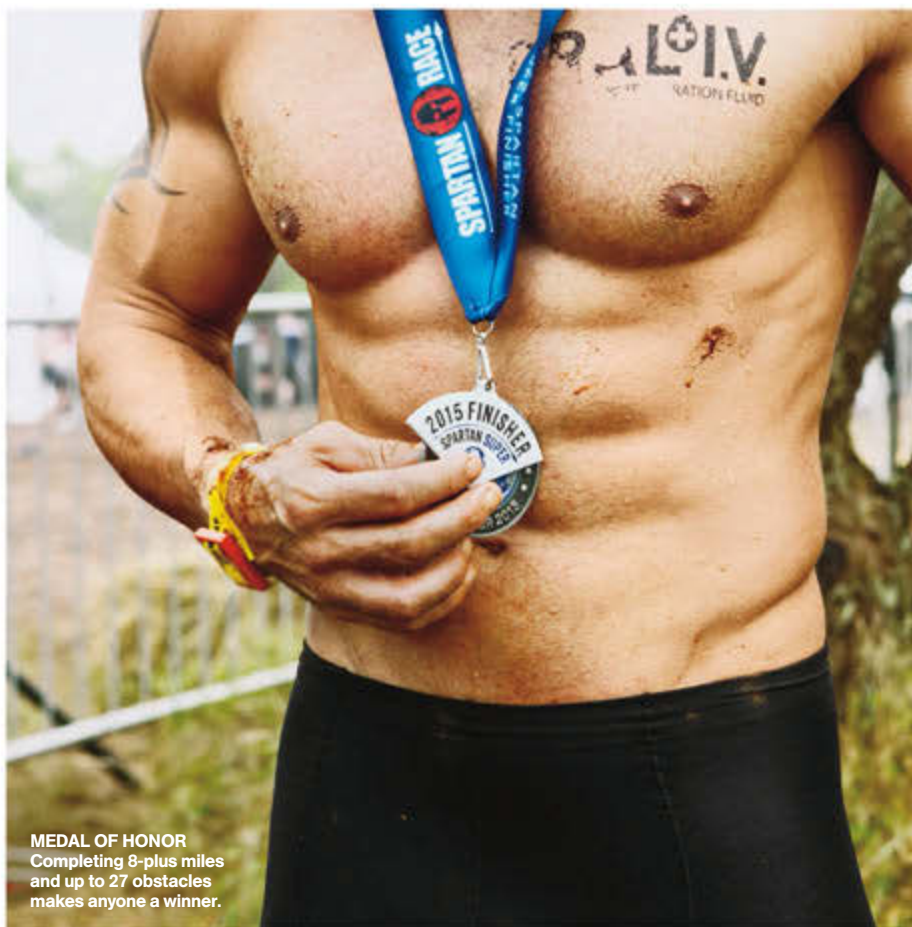
Trail run (or jogging path) for 90 minutes.
Every 10 minutes, stop and
do 10 walking lunges or burpees.

*Head to the track at your local high school or university to complete these workouts. For the complete cardio plan—including weeks 3 to 5—visit MensHealth.com/obstacletraining.

READY, SET, GO! FIND YOUR SUMMER RACE

It's wildly competitive out there. Choose the challenge that best matches your fitness level and mindset.





MEDAL OF HONOR
Completing 8-plus miles
and up to 27 obstacles
makes anyone a winner.

GRAB FOR EXCELLENCE

Building muscle isn't worth a damn if you can't apply your strength to the outside world. "Your grip is what allows you to do that," says David Jack, C.S.C.S., owner of ActiveLab in Phoenix. "Strengthening it is like putting chains on your tires in the winter—you boost the performance and capability of the vehicle by increasing the traction where the wheels meet the road."

Grab two of the heaviest kettlebells you can handle and walk for 100 feet or one minute, whichever comes first. Pinch-grip two 45-pound plates and hold them as long as you can. If your gym has a climbing rope, use it. Bottom line: "Don't just pump iron," says DiStefano. "The standard 1-inch-diameter grip of a barbell is predictable, and obstacle races are not."

Speed Secrets

- 1 **Get Negative** "Pace yourself better with negative-split runs: Finish the last half faster than the first," says coach Jack Daniels.
- 2 **Be More Efficient** "Angle the paddle so it points slightly forward as you pull it through the water," says pro racer Sean Poynter.
- 3 **Finish Stronger** "Dial back 10 percent at the start—you'll be able to finish strong," says Ryan Atkins, champion racer.
- 4 **Energize Dead Legs** "Do transition runs weekly. After a ride, go for a run, even if it's just 10 minutes," says coach John Newsom.

Here's another grip builder from 2015 Tough Mudder obstacle tester Chris Maltbie: Loop two towels over a bar and hold the ends while you do pullups. "I never stop thinking about my grip," says Maltbie, who keeps a spring-loaded grip strengthener in his car. "Anybody can strengthen their grip, and everyone should, but you have to make it a forethought instead of an afterthought."

EMBRACE DISCOMFORT

You can be certain of at least three things during most obstacle races: You will get wet, you will get dirty, and you will grind mud into places you never imagined it could go. "If you don't prepare for running up to 13 miles in muddy, waterlogged shoes and clothing, your performance on race day will take a hit," says Karnazes. His advice: Don't skirt deep puddles, marshy fields, and mud patches when you train; plow through them. "And if your run takes you by a river or lake, jump in and splash around," says Karnazes. "Bonus points if you do it early in your workout."

The same advice goes for training in adverse weather conditions (within reason—no dying before race day). "I've trained in rain, sleet, snow, and temperatures ranging from -55° to 100°F," says Ryan Atkins, who placed second in the 2014 World Spartan Championship. "Because of that, there's almost nothing that can throw me off in a race situation." Condition yourself for the worst, in other words, and you'll fare better than all the fair-weather athletes who train for the best.

"And there's something else you can look forward to during a muddy, dirty obstacle race," says Karnazes. "Some have coed showers at the end." ■

► HOW TO AVOID HEATSTROKE, CONTINUED FROM P. 129

1 Ice Your Insides
Maintaining a lower core temperature will mean less fatigue. That's way more fun to do than you might think. According to a study in the *Clinical Journal of Sports Medicine*, athletes who ate ice slushies during exercise were able to run comfortably for up to 15 minutes longer than those who drank cold water. Try this recipe from endurance coach and exercise physiologist Matt Dixon of PurplePatch Fitness: Blend enough ice to fill an insulated sports bottle, and pour any sports drink over it. On long runs, create a loop that'll allow you to circle back to your bottle at intervals, says Douglas Casa, Ph.D., a professor of kinesiology at the University of Connecticut. And drink water too. You may need to consume 1 to 2 quarts of fluid per hour, he says.

2 Switch Your Shirt
Even if you're rocking the latest breathable, water-wicking performance fabric, at some point your shirt will become so saturated that it'll trap your body heat instead of helping you vent it. Remember: It isn't the sweat that cools your body; it's the evaporation of those beads off your skin. Once the garment feels heavy, it's time to switch it out. "This will enhance the evaporation of sweat, improving your heat tolerance and your cooling response," Casa says.

3 Chill Completely
If you're burning up, it's time for a primitive protocol: cold-water immersion. Fill a kiddie pool with several bags of ice and get in. Frigid water will lower your core temperature about 1 degree every five minutes, Casa says. At hot races, staff may have such tubs set up at the medical tent at the finish. If you're in a remote area, pack a cooler with ice and water in the back of your car to dunk your arms and legs in. Feeling frosty is better than being out cold.

GONE MUDDIN'
Mud pits are notorious
shoe robbers. Tighten up
before taking the plunge.



FORGED IN THE FURNACE

Want to fire up your speed and endurance? Here's how one man ignited his ability to run faster than ever.
By Bob Parks

D

DRIPPING SWEAT AND NEARLY DELIRIOUS, I'M RUNNING ON a treadmill inside a torture chamber: the prison-cell-size "heat sensory lab" of Doug Casa, Ph.D., a professor of kinesiology at the University of Connecticut's Korey Stringer Institute.

The room is stewing at 104°F and 40 percent humidity. And my insides are slowly cooking too, at least according to the thermometer I have stuck up my butt. (Another torture.) My core body temperature hit 101° after about 30 minutes of jogging. Now, 20 minutes later, I'm hovering around 103°—dangerously close to heatstroke. My limbs feel heavy; my brain is foggy. I'm working twice as hard to keep moving, but time feels like it's standing still, which makes me increasingly agitated.

There's a training method to this madness. As a 40ish runner who's lost a step over the years, my mantra about exercising in extreme temperatures is usually "Heat? Ack!" In other words, I avoid it. But then I started hearing rumors about a new style of training dubbed "heat acc," short for heat acclimatization. The legendary triathlete Jesse Thomas reportedly caps off his hard workouts in a sauna. (In May, he won the Wildflower Triathlon for the fifth time; it's one of the largest in the world.) And Ironman Chris Thomas (no relation) cranks his own climate at his home. (At 42, he won three races in the open amateur category last year against guys half his age.)

The protocol they're both using is becoming standard among athletes seeking an edge. Originally developed by Chris Minson, Ph.D., of the University of Oregon, and outlined in the *Journal of Applied Physiology*, the idea is to push your core temp up to 101.3° and then train for an hour at that threshold or just above it. Do this for 10 days straight, and you can condition yourself to use oxygen more efficiently and tire less quickly, the researchers report.

How effective is it? Casa, a Minson disciple, works with NFL players, the U.S. Army Special Forces, and elite athletes to safely heat up their potential. "It's basically natural blood doping," he says.

AFTER CASA TAKES MY VITALS, HE SENDS ME HOME WITH instructions to keep the workouts going. His pep talk is more clinical than rousing. "Even three days in, you'll already have some adaptations, so it should feel easier," he says. "After 10 days you'll have achieved the full effect."

It sounds easy, but I'll be initiating some complex processes that will alter my VO_2 max and lactate threshold—that is, how much air I can suck in under stress and how long it takes for my muscles to cry uncle. Both hinge on a broader physiological factor: blood plasma volume. During heat acc, your kidneys register stress from your reduced blood oxygen and higher heart rate, and release chemical signals to produce more blood plasma. The more plasma your body makes, the more easily it can circulate oxygen-rich blood, keeping your skin cool, muscles clear of lactic acid buildup, and gut primed for efficient hydration.

Sure, those heaters blow a few fuses, but I have to congratulate myself: I've managed to replicate what hell feels like.

Time to bring the heat. I drag my treadmill into the laundry room, stuff the windows with insulation from Home Depot, and crank up three space heaters and a humidifier. When all that gear is turned on, the room easily hits 115°F. Each of my training sessions lasts 90 minutes: It takes half an hour of steady running to hit that 101.3° mark, and another hour of furnace-fueled punishment to start sparking gains. Sure, my rig blows a few fuses, but I have to congratulate myself: I've managed to replicate what hell must feel like.

Would Satan insist on regular rectal probing? Casa does. To hit 101.3° safely (see "How to Avoid Heatstroke" on page 129), you'll need to put a thermometer up your arse about every 10 minutes during the first few torchings. After you're more experienced, you can do it every half hour.

There is an alternative: the CorTemp Ingestible Sensor, a vitamin-size digital thermometer pill. You swallow it and wait for readings to pop up on a handheld receiver. I tried a demo and the pills worked, but I had to plan ahead—the pill needed time to settle in my stomach for accurate readings. Then I had to train right away or risk "downloading my data" too early. At \$2,600 for the wireless receiver plus \$40 per pill per session, I figured I'd stick with the rectal probe.

Men training this way may lose up to 2 quarts of water an hour, Casa says, so you have to hydrate constantly. Another problem: roast beef sandwiches and Heineken. I'm burning tons of calories but replacing them so lazily that I gain a pound or two.

Then there's the heat from my wife. At UConn, Casa had warned me: "Spouses hate me because the room will stink long after you're done working out," he said. Or, as my wife puts it one day, "Are you trying to replicate Gwyneth Paltrow's experiments with vaginal steaming?" That's funny, until later in the week when we try to have sex. For some reason, I'm erect but can't climax—probably because I'm so physically drained. She's happy but I'm annoyed. Not the endurance I'd had in mind.

ON MY RETURN TRIP TO CASA'S LAB, I LEARN that suffering pays off. After 10 days, my VO_2 max has improved by 9.3 percent. My lactate threshold is at... wait, what threshold? In interval workouts, my legs feel so light that I rock a 5:27-mile pace.

When my wife finally demands that I dismantle the hotbox, I agree. But from Casa's recent experiments, which he expects to publish in the next year or two, it appears that I'll need to reignite myself once every five days to maintain my gains.

Now I run exactly when I always feared it the most—at noon, under the summer sun. The best part is, I've ditched that crappy thermometer. After a few uncomfortable spot-checks with it in a nearby porta-potty, I learned to gauge exactly how hard my body is working.

At a recent 5K in Fort Devens, Massachusetts, I finished third overall, dropping several guys who used to beat me. No sweat. ■

maximum summer!

BY Mike Darling / PHOTOGRAPHS BY Sasha Eisenman / P. 134





➔ It's the season of sizzle. (Here's lookin' at you, Charlotte McKinney!) These 44 hot tips will ensure that as the temp soars, your fun factor will too.



Heighten Your Senses

That's the point of summer, if a man does it right. It's the crash of the waves daring you to climb back onto your board. It's the SPF 50 wafting off the bombshell in the bikini checking you out *right over there*. So say hello already: "Don't be afraid to go up to that hot girl on the beach," says supermodel

CHARLOTTE MCKINNEY, who stars this month in *Joe Dirt 2*. (As a refresher, you may need to google her Carl's Jr. Super Bowl ad. You won't be sorry.) "Growing up, I used to go to an inlet to lay out and try to meet all the surfer guys," she adds as she poses for *MH* on California's Point Mugu beach. But even if Charlotte isn't summoning you to her blanket, your body will still be naturally energized. "Summer gives our bodies a physiological jumpstart," says Agustín Fuentes, Ph.D., a professor of anthropology at Notre Dame. "Through social interactions, you have more chances to boost your testosterone, oxytocin, and all the stuff that makes you feel good." Use these tips to fire up your best summer yet.



1/ Take a Surprise Vacation—Today

1. Use reward miles at the last minute, says Brian Kelly, founder of *The Points Guy*, a travel blog. That's when low-cost award seats tend to open up. **2.** Search budget airlines like Norwegian Air and Wow Air, which don't always show up on popular aggregators like Kayak. **3.** Look into low-profile vacation spots such as Argentina, Iceland, and Turkey. "They're incredible in summer," Kelly says.



2 Stay Warm in a Sleeping Bag All Night Long

Camping at altitude can be chilly. Fill a Nalgene bottle with hot water and slip it into your sleeping bag between your legs, says Jason Stevenson, author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Backpacking and Hiking*. "It keeps your body warm and won't freeze overnight—so you'll have water in the morning," he says. An inflatable sleeping pad with an "R-Value" of 4 or more will also help you conserve heat.



3 Make Carnival-Quality Shaved Ice in Your Kitchen

Sure, you could use a machine, but it's easy to go DIY. Puree two cups of frozen fruit in a blender and strain, says Noah French, pastry chef at Sugarmill in Denver. Add 1 cup water and 1 cup simple syrup, pour the mix into a rectangular baking dish, and freeze—but remove it before it's rock solid. Scrape the ice with a fork, returning it to the freezer at 30-minute intervals to harden as needed.



No.

7 Stand Up and Paddle (uh, Sorta) Like a Pro

First time on a paddleboard? Make sure you're using the right equipment. Convert your weight to kilos, says professional paddleboarder Sean Poynter. Now double that number. That's the size paddleboard you want in liters (the unit of measurement for most boards); it's most likely to support your weight. Start somewhere flat and calm. When you're out on the water, hold the paddle with your arms stretched out and slightly bent and your chest open. If you're doing it right, you should create a triangle between your arms, paddle, and chest. Now reach forward. As the paddle enters the water, maintain that triangle and bend at the waist, keeping your back flat. The paddle should stay upright, angled slightly forward. Once the blade is fully submerged, bend a little more at the waist and pull, engaging your core. Reset once the paddle reaches your feet, and repeat.



4 Declare an all-out water balloon war with the \$17 hose adapter from bunchoballoons.com. This handy gadget lets you fill 37 pretied H₂O grenades at once. **5** Find an excuse to submerge GoPro's Hero3+ Silver (gopro.com, \$300). It captures ultra-wide 1080p footage as deep as 131 feet under the sea. **6** Smell more like summer with Lacoste's light, crisp L.12.12 Jaune cologne (\$56, lacoste.com).

FIG. 5



FIG. 6





BREAK THE ICE

"People don't
take everything
so seriously
at the beach, so
it's a great
place to
meet women."

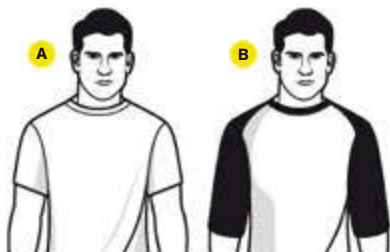


No. 8 make Tee Time

"T-shirts are the most versatile item in your closet," says Brian Boyé, executive fashion director at *Men's Health*. These four are the only tees you need.

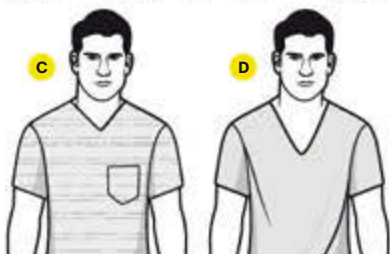
A. Crew Neck

Invest a little extra for quality (nothing in a three-pack).



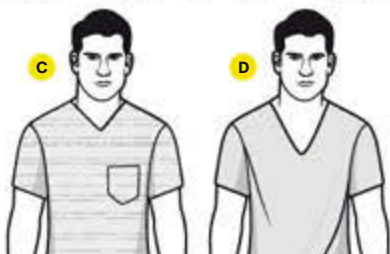
B. Raglan

Very casual. You can wear it to a ball game but not on a date.



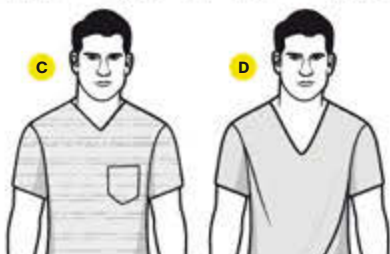
C. Linen Tee

Wear it by itself during the day and under a blazer in the evening.



D. V-Neck

It's extremely versatile. Try it under a cardigan or a varsity jacket.



9 Learn the Simple Secret to Grilling Juicier Sausage

Most people start their sausages over direct heat and move them to indirect heat to finish, says David Guas, host of *American Grilled*. This strategy just dries them out. Instead, cook your sausages over indirect heat for 6 to 8 minutes. Then transfer the links to direct heat and turn them until they're charred on all sides. Do this for no longer than 2 minutes—otherwise you'll lose the juice, Guas warns.



10 Mix Up a Spanish-Style Gin and Tonic

The Brits may have invented the classic G&T, but the Spaniards perfected it, says José Andrés of ThinkFoodGroup. Reach for a large red-wine glass. Add ice cubes and 1½ ounces of gin, and top it off with a quality tonic like Fever-Tree. Add garnishes like dried juniper berries, peppercorns, lemon verbena, or orange zest to add notes that blow lime out of the (tonic) water.



11 Pull Off a Hawaiian Shirt (It Can Be Done!)

Hawaii is hot again, stylistically. But don't pull out that Don Ho hula-girl number your dad once wore. You want a shirt with a tailored fit, says designer David Hart, who's used Hawaiian prints in his collections. And go with deep colors in the background and classic prints (palm leaves, say) for a sophisticated look. Besides Hart's, we like the Palm Tree Print shirt from Express (\$60, express.com).

Line illustrations by TODD DETWILER; Tori Prayer bikini, vintage shirt

PARADISE FOUND
"I used to skip school and drive to the beach on nice days. I just had to get my ass to the ocean."



16/ Plan a Weekend Road Trip



KNOW YOUR LIMITS When picking a destination, consider 300 miles to be a comfortable daily range—it's far enough to make you feel like you've entered a new world but still leaves plenty of time to stop and look at that giant ball of string, says Megan Edwards, founder of roadtripamerica.com and author of *Roads from the Ashes*. Unless you're tag-team driving, 500 miles is about the top limit if you want to keep your sanity intact.

STOP FOR A HAIRCUT The best local intel comes from first-person contact. If you don't have time to hang in the barbershop or grab a burger at a local dive, go old-school by bringing a CB radio. You can also ID good eateries by the number of cars parked outside. Unlike Yelp reviews, parking lots never lie, Edwards says. **PACK A COOLER** Greasy spoons have that name for a reason. Investing in a cheap Styrofoam cooler will encourage you to keep healthy foods and beverages at arm's reach while also conserving cash on the road. And that rest stop Cinnabon will look far less tempting after you've spent the past 30 miles snacking on hummus and trail mix. **UNPLUG THE GPS** Digital maps are more likely to display errors in less populated areas and to eliminate much of the sense of discovery of a good road trip, Edwards says. Plus, any excuse to stare into a screen is an automatic conversation killer. Save the GPS for emergencies and opt instead for a paper map, which also keeps your copilots more actively involved. **SLEEP LIKE A TRUCKER** Highway rest stops are the worst place to sleep. (It's often not even legal.) Truck stops, on the other hand, offer restaurants, Wi-Fi, showers, laundry, and security, Edwards says. Just make sure you use only the spaces marked for cars.

12 Devour a book. This summer's must-read, says *Washington Post* critic Ron Charles, is *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel. **13** To chill a beer fast, wrap it in wet newspaper and sprinkle on kosher salt. Stash it in the freezer for five minutes. **14** Packing? Stick your shoes in zip-top bags to protect the clothes. **15** Keep a spare hoodie handy for cool nights. We like Splendid's Vintage Active Zip (\$158, splendid.com).

FIG. 12



FIG. 14



FIG. 15



No.

17

Camp Like a Boy Scout

Before you leave, raid the cupboard: Heavy-duty trash bags make great pack liners to keep your stuff dry. When setting up camp, avoid ponds, open meadows, and valleys—these spots are colder and more exposed. You'll be a lot warmer and safer in a flat, wooded area, says Andrew Skurka, author of *The Ultimate Hiker's Gear Guide*.



18 Give guacamole a kick by adding diced peaches, crumbled bacon, pomegranate seeds, or toasted coconut flakes, says chef/restaurateur Roberto Santibañez.

19 Flirt on sunny days and the weather will give your approach better odds, a study in *Social Influence* found.

20 A barefoot run on the beach helps strengthen your feet, leaving you less prone to injury, says *Running Strong* author Jordan Metzl, M.D.

21 Wander a garden with your date: In a French study, women exposed to flowers rated men as sexier.

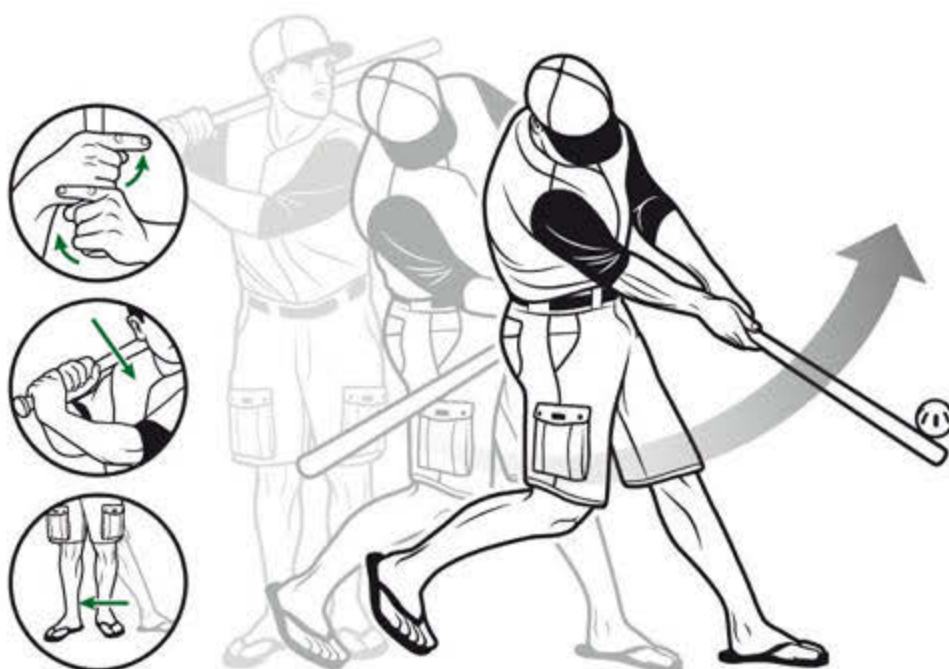
22 Cut the AC when you're getting freaky. Hot, sweaty sex leaves you swimming in arousal-boosting hormones.

23 Pitch your tent so the door faces east. That way it'll catch the sunrise and warm up faster on frigid mornings.

FIG. 18



FIG. 23



No. 24 CRUSH a WIFFLE BALL

Follow these steps to become the Bryce Harper of your backyard.

Arm Yourself

Make sure you use the skinny yellow plastic bat, says Jim Bottorff, founder of the World Wiffle Ball Championships. Don't let the size fool you—these official bats are explosive.

Shoulder the Burden

A little bit of patience will pay off. Keep the bat resting on your shoulder until you take your hack, Bottorff says. This will help you avoid an early swing and "pulling" the ball.

Get a Grip

Another common mistake, says Bottorff, is squeezing the bat too hard. If your hands are tense, then your body will be too, and you won't swing efficiently. Take a deep breath.

Stand Corrected

Narrow your stance as you prepare to swing, Bottorff says. That'll maximize your arm extension, which translates to more power. Alert the neighbors to an incoming dinger.

No.

25

Take a Better Vacation Photo

Take control of your depth of field, says Jerry Monkman, author of *The AMC Guide to Outdoor Digital Photography*. A smaller F-stop (like F16) will render more clarity to the photo—great for mountain and beach scenes. A shallow depth of field (like F4) will focus on the subject—great for portraits and wildlife. Vary the shutter speed too. A fast setting (say, 1/500) freezes the action. A slower speed (1/30) blurs the image, creating a sense of motion. Use a tripod to keep the static parts of the image sharp.



Courtesy Discreet (flying disc), Getty Images (tent)



26 Raise Your Tennis Game, One Swing at a Time

Get geeky by upgrading to the Babolat Play Pure Drive, suggests master racket technician Brandon Arradaza. Sensors in the grip link to a smartphone app for tracking performance. "And thanks to its head size, beam width, and string pattern, the racket provides a generous margin for error and access to power and spin," Arradaza says. \$300, babolat.com



29 Unplug from Your Work Email on Vacation

You won't appreciate a vacation until you disentangle yourself from your devices, says management expert Robert Sutton, Ph.D., author of *The No Asshole Rule*. At work, be up front about your time off: Tell your boss you'll be away from email and that you've arranged to have your duties covered. A good manager should understand—just make sure the boss's ass will be covered too.



27 Serve Up Sweet, Succulent Corn on the Cob

Strip the husks and silk from four ears of corn and simmer in 8 cups of chicken stock for 25 minutes, says chef Troy Guard. Then clarify your butter: Melt half a stick of unsalted butter over very low heat and let it gently simmer until it foams. Spoon off the foam and pour the butter through a mesh strainer. Use this to dress the ears, and season them with salt and freshly ground pepper.



30 Learn the Easiest Way Ever to Burn Fat

Dump your excess bacon grease into the cups of an empty cardboard egg carton, suggests backpacking expert Jason Stevenson. Add strings for wicks and put the carton in the freezer in a plastic bag to help the stuff solidify (and not stink). "Single cups are great fire starters," Stevenson says, "and they burn like Saturn V rocket fuel. Plus, it's an excuse to eat bacon!"



28 Ditch Those Uncool Cargo Shorts for Good

Slim, tailored shorts that fall 2 to 5 inches above the knee work well for a guy who has an average build, says *MH* fashion director Sandra Nygaard. "Look for sun-washed reds, greens, and blues," she advises. If you're feeling bold, try a nautical look, color blocking, florals, or geometric patterns. "Summer is the time to make a splash with color and pattern," Nygaard says.



31 Score a Tent with Room (and Lighting) to Spare

You'll want the Big Agnes Rattlesnake SL2 mtnGLO, says Kristin Hostetter, gear editor at *Backpacker* magazine. "The near-vertical mesh walls make this 27-square-footer feel roomy." But the real standout is the built-in LED lighting sewn into the seams. Flick a switch, and you've got enough illumination for reading, no headlamp required. \$350, bigagnes.com

32/ Dominate Your Pickup Game



ATTACK THE FOOT.

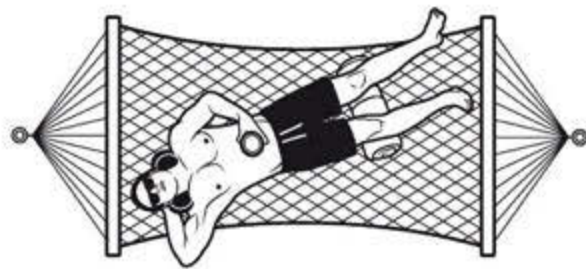
Most of the time your defender will have one foot forward, says Collin Castellaw of the online hoops instruction site Shot Mechanics. Drive to the hoop with your "mirrored" foot—the one in line with your opponent's forward foot. That'll put him off balance, giving you an advantage.

SHINE THE GLASS. When a player shoots a brick, the rebound can go in only one of four directions—short, right, left, or long, Castellaw says. But most players shoot off the back of the rim, which means the rebound is most likely to go long. Position your body accordingly: First, box out your own man, and then shift your position so your back is to the baseline. Locate the ball and snatch it up. "It's not about jumping highest but about being in the right spot," Castellaw says.

No. 33

Dream on

You've never experienced true relaxation until you've spent a balmy afternoon dozing in a hammock.



Your Snooze Strategy

Lie diagonally across a hammock, says Derek Hansen, author of *The Ultimate Hang: An Illustrated Guide to Hammock Camping*. With the correct sag established by your anchor points, being diagonal keeps your body flat, not curled like a banana. Avoid hyperextension of your knees by placing a rolled towel or pillow behind them. Add a small pillow to brace the sides of your head.

FIG. 34



34 Pack a badass beach towel like L.L.Bean's soft, stylish, absorbent Seaside (\$30, lbean.com). **35** A Nomad solar panel (\$80, nomad.com) can fuel your smartphone with emergency juice. (Note: Posting shirtless selfies to Instagram doesn't qualify as an emergency.)

FIRE STARTER

"My friends and I used to sneak out and throw bonfire parties at the beach. It was just total freedom."



No. 36

Blast a Better Outdoor Speaker

The Braven BRV-X (\$200, braven.com) has crisper sound and better bass than speakers that cost a hundred bucks more, and we auditioned a ton of them. It weighs a mere 1½ pounds, plays for 12 hours on a charge, and will keep on cranking out your party tunes even if your idiot buddy drops it into a slush-filled cooler. And should your actual iPhone lose power, you can even charge it back up through the BRV-X's handy USB port.



37 Do Some Prep, Then Rock the Flip-Flops

First, soften calluses and exfoliate by using a lotion containing urea, salicylic acid, or lactic acid, such as Eucerin Intensive Repair, says dermatologist Angela Lamb, M.D., of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. Then trim your nails with a clipper and file them down with an emery board.



39 Hurl a Frisbee to the Moon (or Across the Lawn)

One of the easiest ways to breathe life into a backyard party is by breaking out the flying disk. Our pick: The Discraft Ultra-Star 175 (\$11, amazon.com) glows in the dark to keep the action going after hours. Or try a game of KanJam (\$40, kanjam.com) for a bit of friendly competition.



38 Blend the Perfect Summer Protein Shake

Try this fruity muscle builder, courtesy of Kevin Curry, founder of the food and nutrition blog *Fit Men Cook*: 1 cup coconut water, 1 cup chopped watermelon, ½ cup chopped pineapple, ⅓ cup peeled cucumber, the juice of 1 lime, 2 sprigs mint, ice, and ¾ cup low-fat Greek yogurt.



40 Create a Refreshing Warm-Weather Cocktail

Serve this now, says cocktail guru Jim Meehan: Muddle a strawberry with ½ ounce simple syrup; add ½ ounce lemon juice and 2 ounces Noval Black. Shake with ice and strain into a chilled Collins glass filled with ice. Top with 2 ounces of club soda and garnish with a cucumber wheel.

44/ Catch a Game (and Not Cancer)

By Anthony Rizzo



M My big-league debut arrived when I was called up on June 26, 2012. It was just a few days after the start of summer, and I was with my third team in three years. I'm glad I ended up in a Cubs uniform when I got my promotion, because I remember it being like the scene in *Rookie of the Year*—except I got lost on the way to the dugout. Finally, I burst out of the tunnel and ran onto the field. When I made it onto the diamond, the ovation gave me chills.

In my first at-bat I hit a bleeder into the infield that was first ruled an error. But the official scorer gave me a break. Now I feel at home at Wrigley. Down at first base I'm close to the crowd, so I hear everything. (Most of the time it's positive!) I love the day games, the sun, the ivy growing up the outfield walls, all the fans in the bleachers. I love to send them souvenirs they won't throw back.

Still, I worry about the fans. I had Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2008, so as a cancer survivor, I'm concerned when I see people without hats, in tank tops, and with their arms taking on that lobster look. They should follow my example. I get Nivea for Men sunscreen by the caseload and share it around the clubhouse—just like going around the horn before an inning. Sunscreen is part of my uniform, like the blue pinstripes. That's because the only Big C that I want is the one that stands for "Cubs." Oh, and Championship, too. ■

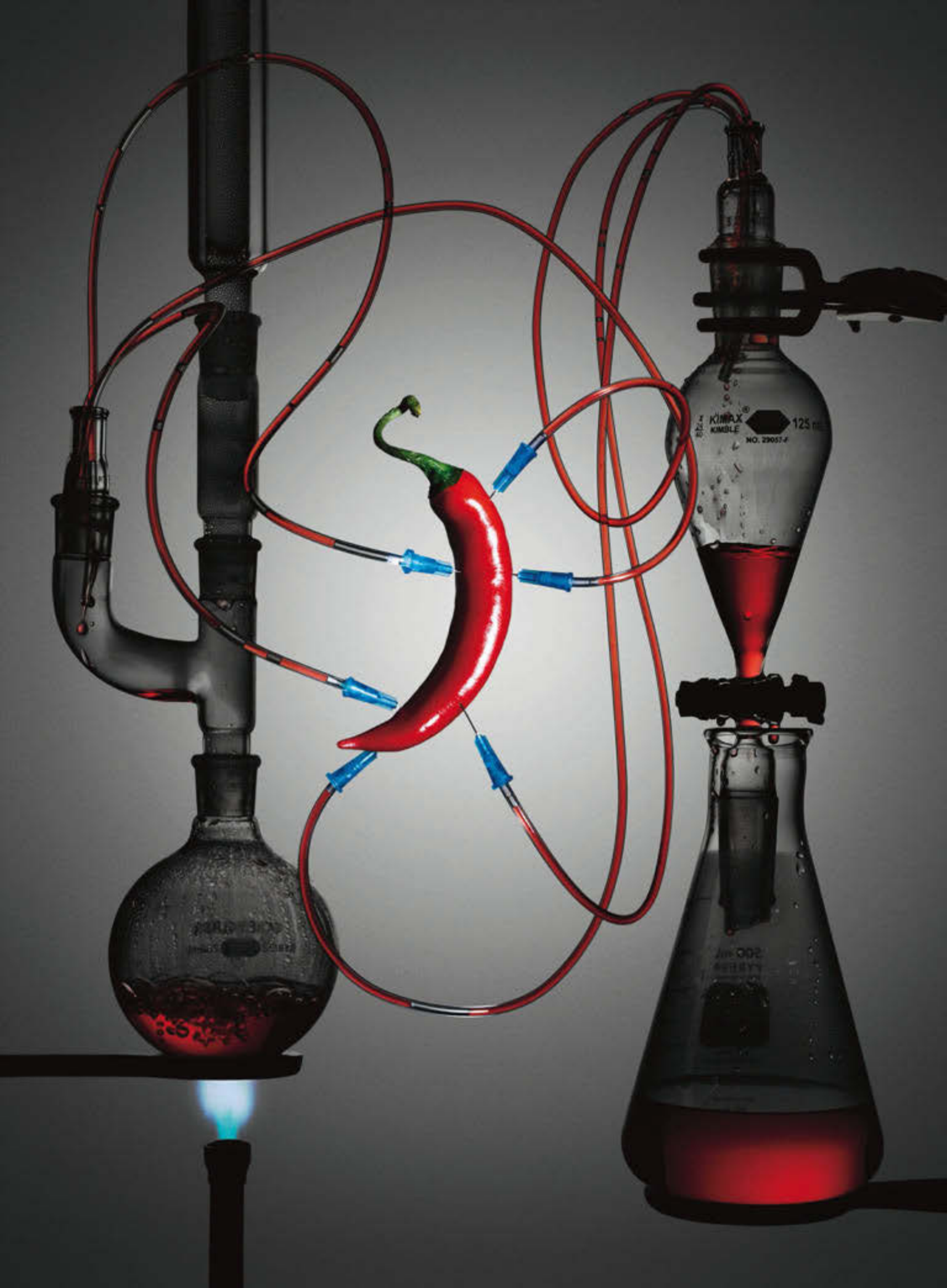
41 Dunk your hands in ice water after you go running in hot weather. Your blood vessels are more tightly packed there, and the cooler blood will circulate throughout your body. **42** Eating foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, like salmon, could help protect your skin from searing (in addition to SPF, of course). **43** There's no shame in traveling alone—think of it as a chance to reinvent yourself. Who knows? It just might stick.

FIG. 41

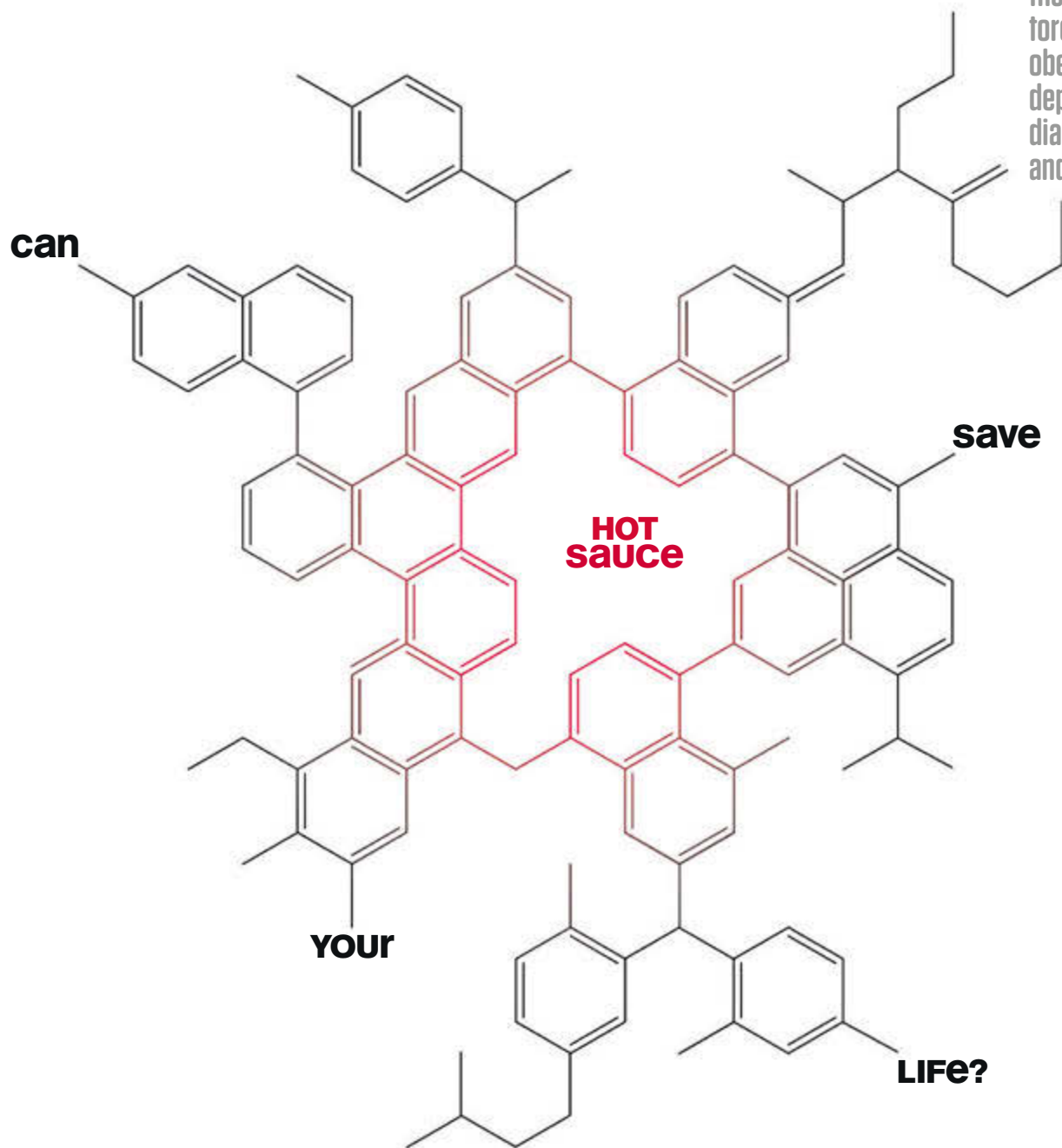


FIG. 42





➡ Chile peppers are the hottest thing in medicine. Here's how they may torch pain, obesity, depression, diabetes, and cancer.







"SURGEONS HAD TO PUT A CAGE IN MY SINUSES TO KEEP MY BRAIN IN PLACE WHILE THEY TORE ALL THIS TISSUE OUT,"

says Ed Currie, 51, a contagiously likable banker turned chile breeder. Today, as he's driving down a highway just outside Charlotte, North Carolina, in a van emblazoned with his company name—PuckerButt Pepper Co.—he smiles constantly, happy to be alive.

The surgery took place in 2007. After dealing with months of headaches and nosebleeds, Currie finally received a diagnosis: A doctor had discovered a suspicious mass in his head. Then the mass tripled in size in a few weeks. Currie was alarmed—his body had already been battered by cancer. Decades earlier he'd had a malignant growth removed from his arm, and he later underwent surgery for thyroid cancer and a trifecta of skin cancers: basal cell, squamous cell, and repeat melanomas.

Currie figured this operation might be his fatal finale. After 10 hours of excavating, the doctors sent tissue samples to a lab. They came back benign.

How? Currie glances reflexively into the rearview mirror at a cooler containing a dozen high-powered chile pepper pods. One of them, dubbed the Carolina Reaper, holds the Guinness World Record for hottest pepper on earth—1,569,300 Scoville heat units, which is 157 times more intense than

a jalapeño. "I credit the fact that I've been eating eight to 10 superhot peppers every day for more than a decade now," he says.

As is his routine on many days, Currie is on his way to a news station to share his conviction that the capsaicin within his potent payload—the complex phytochemical that gives chiles their burn—is keeping him alive.

BETWEEN THE PUTATIVE HEALTH MIRACLES AND flavor-rich heat, the world's hottest plants are redlining in popularity these days. Globally, a quarter of humanity eats chiles daily, and after a timid start, Americans are finally catching up with the rest of the world. Since the 1960s, U.S. chile imports have surged 1,200 percent. In 1991, salsa officially surpassed ketchup for the first time as the nation's largest-selling condiment.

The heat wave has intensified ever since. Tabasco and sriracha bottles have popped up in just about every restaurant. Wendy's offers "jalapeño ghost pepper fries"—not that you'd nosh on those, right? At the more elite end of the sales counter, Noah Chaimberg, a "chile sommelier" and the founder of Heatonist, a hot-sauce emporium in Brooklyn, offers connoisseurs their choice of more than 150 fiery concoctions. "Someone might ask what goes well with a roast leg of lamb," Chaimberg explains, "and I'll recommend a blueberry ghost pepper sauce."

Which brings up a uniquely human trait. Most mammals avoid eating spicy peppers, repelled by the painful aftershock. We humans alone seem hooked on heat, willing to cram ever more fire into our mouths. What gives?

Initially, self-preservation may have been a factor. In the pre-refrigeration era, foodborne illnesses caused by fungi and bacteria could fester unchecked. But early civilizations, especially those in warm climates, appear to have learned that spicy ingredients can nuke those germs, says Paul Sherman, Ph.D., an ecologist at Cornell University. When used in cooking, chiles, cumin, garlic, and a handful of other tongue-searing seasonings kill 75 percent or more of the most common foodborne pathogens, says Sherman, who's published his findings in the journal *BioScience*.

Thus "spicy" became our sensory shorthand for "safe"—if still slightly painful. The raw capsaicin in chile peppers may have saved our lives thousands of years ago. But now more and more people seem to think that it can improve our health in specially targeted ways as well.

Faith in the medicinal power of chiles is hardly a new thing. The peppers were revered as holy healers by the Incas and also became favorites among practitioners of folk medicine. As a result, they've popped up in homespun cures for a wide range of ills, including diarrhea, hangovers, and tooth pain. Men have even used them to enhance sexual performance. (There's a numbing effect if you rub the things on your genitals—allegedly.)



Researchers are firing up lots of capsaicin-based remedies. These three may help spark a recovery.

Cauterize Headaches Capsaicin-based nasal sprays desensitize your inflamed trigeminal nerve to help ease the pounding, research in the journal *Neurology* reports. Opt for Ausanil. \$35, ausanil.com

Blaze Back Pain A cream containing at least 0.075 percent capsaicin may help, a study in *Phytotherapy Research* suggests. Try Zostrix to meet that heat level. \$20, walgreens.com

Sear Sinus Trouble Another schnoz-spray bonus: University of Cincinnati scientists say sprays with *Capsicum annum* relieve congestion and sinus pressure. Go with Sinus Buster. \$15, cvs.com

Cue the disclaimer: Don't try this at home, guys. There's only anecdotal evidence that it works. Still, modern science is uncovering biochemical clues that could lead to specialized (and far more practical) therapies for conditions like chronic pain, obesity, depression, diabetes, and cancer. "The pharmaceutical industry has spent billions on developing such meds," says Arpad Szallasi, M.D., Ph.D., a pathologist at Monmouth Medical Center who has authored nearly a hundred studies and reviews about modern capsaicin-based medicine. By his estimate, that makes the search for pepper power one of the most expensive therapeutic missions in history.

The work hasn't escaped the notice of marketers. Baja Fresh now advertises that its chile seasoning "keeps cancer at bay." You can buy a cure-all called "capsiate" in the supplement section of many grocery stores. Scientists, cautious by nature, nonetheless hope they're on the cusp of some scorching breakthroughs. "In a food-as-medicine context, peppers may be an important aspect of promoting wellness and preventing disease at a population health level," says Marc Brodsky, M.D., medical director of integrative medicine at Stamford Hospital in Connecticut, who does research on capsaicin.

FOR A TIME, MOST OF WHAT CURRIE PUT INTO HIS BODY WAS MORE destructive than healing. Despite a family history of cancer, he couldn't have cared less about maintaining his health.

Nearly two decades ago, while living in Michigan, Currie bottomed out. He was a functional alcoholic who drank nearly a gallon of booze a day and had racked up numerous drunk-driving offenses. Divorced and depressed, he ate poorly and ballooned to 368 pounds. His idea for trimming down: Guzzle SlimFast cut with Stoli.

By the winter of 1999, Currie had resolved to stay indoors and just drink himself to death. "I didn't want to live anymore," he says. "My life was a disaster." Then one night he claims he saw an angel who told him to seek treatment. So he loaded his Camaro with liquor, money, and clothes and set out in a snowstorm for a nearby rehabilitation facility. After a week of rehab, he says, "the lights came on again."

When he checked out, he left with a simple dream. He wanted to move to a warmer place and pursue a hobby that involved the only thing he loved more passionately than the bottle: chile peppers. So three years later, when he'd completed his aftercare treatment, Currie decamped for South Carolina. His driver's license had been revoked, so he started walking to his 12-step program meetings at the local church.

By 2001, Currie's weight was down to 184 pounds. At one meeting he met a woman named Linda and fell hard for her. Linda said she loved salsa, so he mixed up his own concoction for her, using tomatoes, peaches, mangoes, and peppers from his flourishing garden. Within a year they were married.

Today they're raising two kids in a home surrounded by acres of experimental peppers, which Currie occasionally donates to researchers at Win-

throp University and many other labs with which he's signed nondisclosure agreements.

Now when Currie gives his wife a hug, she can often smell the peppers on his breath. "What kind of person eats a superhot pepper, goes through all the pain, sweat, and tears, and then craves more?" she jokes with him. Currie answers with his own rhetorical question: "Don't you think my peppers are keeping me alive?"

THE SCIENTIFIC SEARCH FOR THE SOURCE of chile heat dates back to the early 1800s, when chemists first began analyzing phytochemical suspects. Whatever the compound was, they knew it was concentrated in the oily yellow droplets bubbling out of the pepper's cross walls where the seeds attach. Chemists tried various solvents to extract increasingly pure samples of the mystery

HOW HOT PEPPERS SOUND THE ALARM

stuff. Finally, in 1846, a British chemist named J.C. Thresh isolated the goo in a crystalline form and dubbed it capsaicin.

Capsaicin is an alkaloid, a close chemical cousin of famous plant-derived alkaloids like caffeine, nicotine, morphine, and cocaine. By the early 20th century, drugmakers were investing heavily in alkaloid research, hoping to exploit their chemical properties for patentable remedies.

At the pharmaceutical giant Parke-Davis, a chemist named Wilbur Scoville was assigned to assess the heat content of various chiles. In 1912 he invented his famous heat scale, a measure of the number of dilutions necessary before our tongue no longer senses any burn. The habanero set the early record at 350,000 Scoville units.

Parke-Davis incorporated capsaicin into a proprietary muscle massage liquid, Heet liniment. Once the initial skin sensation faded, capsaicin provided pain relief by temporarily numbing deeper tissues. Soon bicyclists and other outdoor-exercise enthusiasts began using capsaicin the other way around, formulating "embrocation creams" to make their cold legs feel warmer in frigid conditions. Both preparations worked, at least modestly, for their intended purposes. But the mechanism by which capsaicin could both cause and block pain remained a mystery.

After World War II, a Hungarian pharmacologist named Nicholas Jancsó developed a unique theory: Capsaicin, he argued, binds to unknown receptors on pain nerves, exciting them (that initial burn) until they become too exhausted to keep firing (the subsequent anesthesia). The affected nerves would be unable to transmit additional pain signals until they'd had a prolonged "refractory period" to rest and recharge.

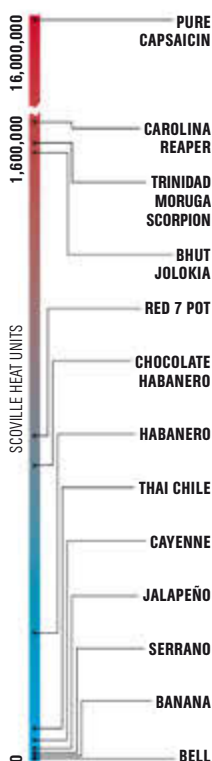
This, he predicted, meant capsaicin could help relieve chronic nerve pain—a prophecy that was validated decades later when the FDA approved prescription capsaicin medications to be used clinically to relieve the body-racking pain caused by shingles and diabetes.

In the '90s, scientists discovered a clue to the receptor that triggered this reaction. Dr. Szallasi and Peter Blumberg, Ph.D., of the National Cancer Institute, found that resiniferatoxin (RTX), an alkaloid produced in the sap of a cactus-like plant (and chile relative) native to Morocco, acted like capsaicin but was far more powerful—1 million times more potent than a habanero.

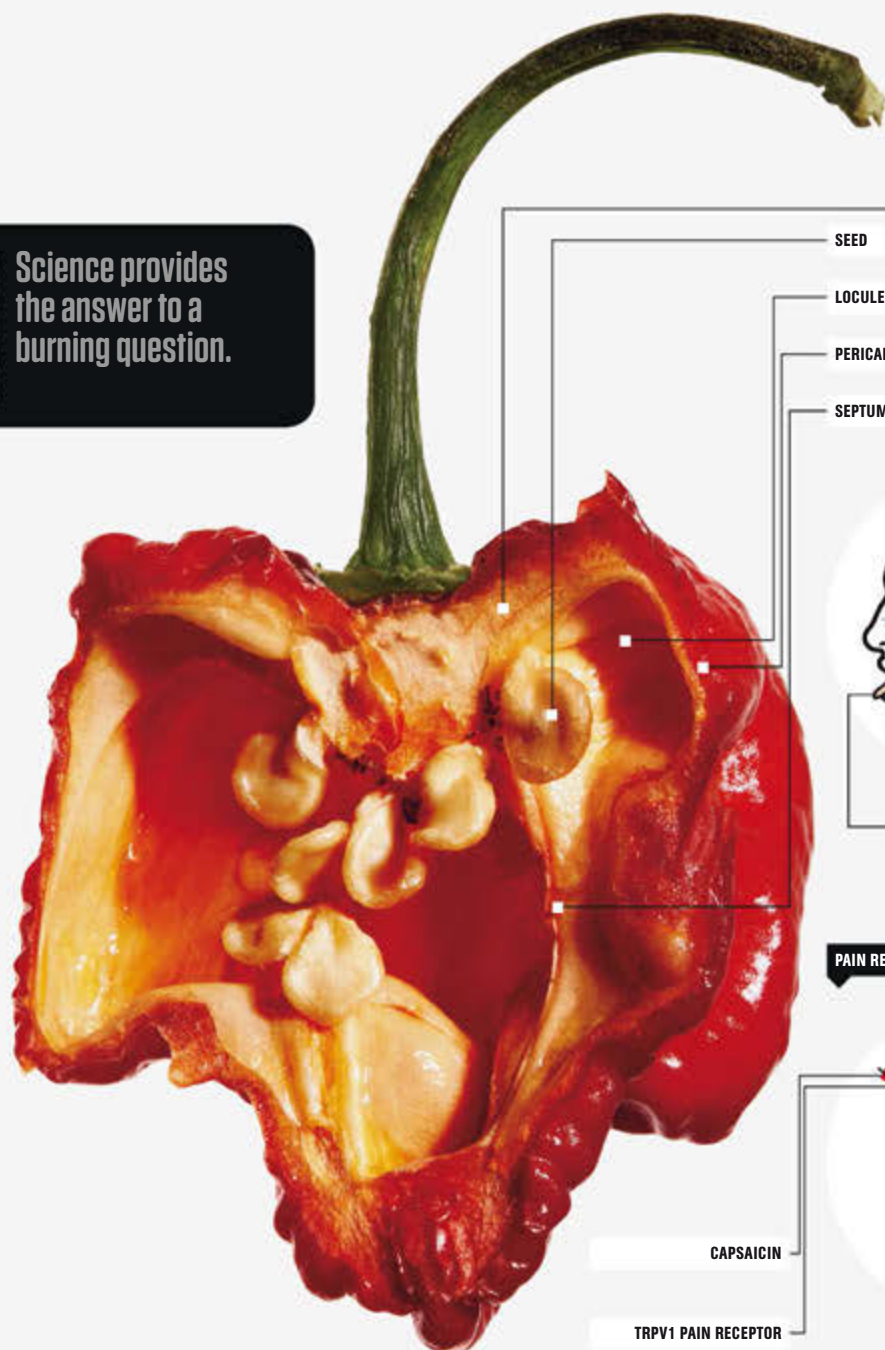
Using RTX, the scientists were able to easily target a class of nerves that interfere with the

THE SCOVILLE SCALE

All your culinary peppers rated, from the benign bell to the ballistic Carolina reaper. Read this or weep.



Science provides the answer to a burning question.



SEED

LOCULE

PERICARP

SEPTUM

PLACENTAL REGION

WELCOME TO THE NUCLEAR CORE OF THE CHILE PEPPER. THIS IS WHERE THE SEEDS ATTACH TO THE WALL OF THE FRUIT. UP TO 89 PERCENT OF THE FIRE CAN BE FOUND IN THIS HOT ZONE.

1

You Chew the Chile Pepper

Crushing the skin releases the concentrated capsaicin from the placental region. That chemical trips your tongue's TRPV1 receptors, sending a fire alarm via neurons to your brain. In turn, your brain initiates a protective response: You're now sweating as endorphins rush to your bloodstream.



PAIN RECEPTORS

2

The Contact Site Responds

Your TRPV1 receptors are flooded with capsaicin molecules, which bind to the nerves, causing calcium ions to surge into nearby cells. Now your body has been chemically duped into considering this painful. Drink milk—it has casein, a substance that surrounds capsaicin and washes it away. —BEN PAYNTER

CAPSAICIN

TRPV1 PAIN RECEPTOR



sensations of pain and heat. Those same receptors also react strongly to capsaicin. A few years later, researchers assigned the formal designation for the receptors: TRPV1.

They soon learned that a purpose of TRPV1 is to sense heat and trigger a reflex—part of the signaling system that causes you to jerk your hand away from a hot stove. With capsaicin, that “burn” is a chemical illusion. Humans are willing to endure it because they have the higher-order logic necessary to recognize the parlor trick. Now researchers are trying to leverage capsaicin's odd physiological kick into salves for a remarkable range of disorders. Peppers may be able to...

The “burn” of capsaicin is a chemical illusion. We are willing to endure it because our higher-order logic can recognize the parlor trick.

► **Nuke pain.** In a recent experiment with dogs suffering from bone cancer, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine anesthetized the animals and then injected RTX into the fluid around their spinal cords, hoping to reduce the transmission of pain signals to the brain. It worked: After a short period of extreme excitation, the dogs' TRPV1 receptors were effectively scorched and killed. Afterward, dogs that had been so racked with pain they couldn't stand were able to play again.

Several years earlier, scientists at the National Institutes of Health conducted trials of RTX as a molecular scalpel to block pain in cancer patients. While that research is ongoing, preliminary results hint that RTX can have applications far beyond just helping Rover regain the ability to roll over. It may selectively and irreversibly delete neurons that transmit pain while leaving other motor and sensory nerves unaffected. That could mean permanent pain relief for people who've been constantly afflicted.

► **Smoke out sadness.** Capsaicin may do more than just numb pain nerves. During the initial reaction, excited TRPV1 receptors seem to trigger a surge of painkilling, mood-lifting endorphins. That has researchers excited about capsaicin as a fix for depression. At New Mexico Tech, volunteers were asked to eat jalapeños and then indicate the moment when all burning sensations were gone. “As soon as this happened,” says Paul Bosland, Ph.D., head of the Chile Pepper Institute at New Mexico State University, “they were injected with an endorphin blocker, and the burning sensations came right back.”

Bosland suspects that endorphins may better explain how guys like Ed Currie become habituated to the heaters. “It’s much like Pavlov’s dog,” Bosland explains. “You know you’re going to consume something hot, and your body releases endorphins in anticipation.” As the famous “runner’s high” attests, endorphins also boost mood. “They’re known as well-being hormones that relieve stress and make people relaxed and happy,” says Dr. Szallasi.

► **Stoke metabolism.** This is a well-documented effect of capsaicin. In a study from South Korea, 31 obese women received either injections of capsaicinoids or a placebo into their abdominal skin twice a week for eight weeks. The women who’d received capsaicin enjoyed significantly greater reductions in their body weight, BMI, waist circumference, and waist-to-hip ratio than those who’d gotten the placebo.

“Metabolism may decrease with weight loss, and we saw this in the placebo group,” says Dr. Brodsky. But those who received capsaicin injections just under the skin in the belly area avoided this dispiriting dip, which may make weight loss progressively more difficult with each pound shed. “In laboratory mice,” adds Dr. Brodsky, “capsaicin has decreased chronic inflammation caused by fat cells. This may also help fight obesity and related disorders.”

For now, the best recommendation is to maintain metabolism during weight loss by physical activity, and to be cautious in promoting any specific dietary or herbal remedy as a stand-alone treatment. When taken orally, capsaicin always burns, says Mary O’Connell, Ph.D., a cellular biologist at New Mexico State University. That sensation alone doesn’t mean your supplement is working the way the label states it might.

► **Incinerate diabetes.** “Epidemiological studies have long found that populations with diets that are rich in capsaicin have fewer cases of diabetes,” says Andrew Dillin, Ph.D., a professor of molecular and cell biology at UC Berkeley. The research is starting to show why. Last year, Dillin published a study in the journal *Cell* that showed strong evidence of the link between capsaicin receptors, insulin resistance, diabetes, and longevity.

Dillin and his colleagues at Berkeley and La Jolla’s Salk Institute have shown how this works in mice. First, they bred a test batch without TRPV1 receptors; the furballs essentially lived in that moment when you’ve survived the assault and are basking in the afterglow, your nerves so desensitized that you don’t even flinch as more hot stuff goes down the hatch. The result: These mice also produced dramatically less of an inflammatory compound called CGRP, which shuts down the pancreas’s ability to release insulin, allowing blood sugar levels to rise.

Because they lacked TRPV1, these mice avoided such problems. They seemed largely immune to diabetes and obesity, living 14 percent longer and even staying trim in their old age. Dillin predicts that some prescription drugs aimed at targeting inflammation—migraine medicine, for example—might have this same side effect.

More practically, eating a lot of capsaicin appears to accomplish the same thing. Flooding your TRPV1s with excess capsaicin can eventually decommission some of the neurons they’re found in. For now, no one knows how many Scovilles and what frequency will make the most impact. But it’s the strongest argument yet for slathering sriracha on everything.

► **Singe cancer.** Meanwhile, science is exploring ingenious alternative ways to tap capsaicin to kill prostate cancer. At a recent annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research, for instance, a team from the University of Toronto reported that dietary capsaicin delivered before radiation treatment “radio-sensitizes” tumor cells, softening them up, so to speak, so they’re more easily dispatched by zaps of ionizing radiation.

(As for why Currie’s tumor was benign, the explanation is less clear. But Currie believes his pepper intake is why he’s still cancer-free.)

Capsaicin may work elsewhere too. In 2014, researchers at the University of Alcalá in Spain reported that capsaicin was effective at vanquishing multiple kinds of cancer, including colon, pancreatic, liver, breast, and many others—though it seemed to do so through different mechanisms, depending on the tumor type. In some cancer cell lines, for instance, capsaicin induces apoptosis, or cellular suicide. In others, it bollixes specific “transcription factors” that cancers require to grow.

“Increasingly, cancer therapies are using a combination of compounds to hit different molecular targets,” explains Nieves Rodríguez-Henche, Ph.D., a lecturer in biochemistry and molecular biology at Alcalá’s School of Medicine and Health Sciences. “Drugs working together produce enhanced results with lower toxicity.”

Capsaicin may lack the shock-and-awe potency of classic chemo, but it could still play a valuable role. “We believe capsaicin may prove to serve as a modest but significant adjunct to other forms of treatment,” Rodríguez-Henche says.

Not everyone in the research community agrees that the risk is worth the cost. Sherman, the evolutionary biologist and a professor emeritus at Cornell University, says capsaicin may be a double-edged sword: “For some cancers, it may be a carcinogen, for others a cocarcinogen, and for others an anticarcinogen.”

For instance, scientists at the University of Minnesota recently discovered that lab mice consistently treated with capsaicin-based skin creams could develop cancer over time if they came into contact with another tumor promoter—like, say, the ultraviolet radiation of sunlight. It’s your basic handle-with-care warning. If capsaicin is as powerful as researchers believe, then like any drug it might cause harm when used improperly. Even the best medicines have dose limits.

Still, Dr. Szallasi remains optimistic. “As a doctor, I am supposed to follow evidence-based medicine, and I am not aware of any scientific evidence to support many of these Chile claims,” he says. “That said, I am keeping an open mind. Lack of evidence often just means that the appropriate experiment has yet to be performed.”

THE CAMERAS ARE ROLLING INSIDE CHARLOTTE’S Fox affiliate TV station as an anchor named Caitlin welcomes Currie on the set and gamely volunteers to taste-test a pepper code-named HP 56. (The HP stands for “high power,” and the number for the variety of plant; he’s bred more than 70 kinds of proprietary peppers.)

Before allowing the stunt, though, Currie issues a warning: This new one is nearly twice as incendiary as the Carolina Reaper—that is, it packs at least double the heat of most pepper sprays.

Caitlin asks the obvious: Why create such a monstrous vegetable? “I eat them medicinally,” Currie says, chuckling as he shifts into health-evangelism mode. “I truly believe God’s got me on a mission to promote this gift he’s given me.”

Caitlin shakes her head, eyeing the plateful of HP 56s less as a gift from that heavenly higher power than from a fire-and-brimstone-loving demon. Reluctantly, she places a tiny sliver on her tongue; within seconds the bonfire ignites. Her face turns red, her eyes water, and her skin shines with sweat. “I don’t recommend anybody doing this,” she croaks, only half joking.

Currie smiles benignly and gives her a handkerchief. If she spits it out now, he tells her, she’ll avoid another round of even worse fire later in the digestive process.

The anchor opts to extinguish early, depositing the molten mouthful into the swatch of cloth she’s holding. Everyone’s laughing—until Currie reaches over, grabs a whole pod, and casually pops it into his mouth.

He chews slowly, relishing the combustion. His eyes tear up, but he seems calm, otherwise unfazed. “My peppers burn me as much as anybody,” he says. But he’ll take it. ■

▶ CHRIS PRATT, CONT. FROM P. 123

Now Pratt is starring in *Jurassic World*, which imagines the dinosaur park 22 years after the original film took place. “*Jurassic Park* was my *Star Wars*,” says Pratt. “It was a huge part of my childhood—it was part of what defined me.” His character, Owen Grady, is a new and career-defining role: “He’s quick to react. He’s tough. He can be vicious. He’s a former combat veteran who’s willing to put his life on the line to save other people.”

When you see Owen Grady on the big screen, chiseled and gallant, it’s hard to recall the fat guy who sat in a screening room a few years ago and vowed to turn heads. Mission accomplished, a SEAL might say. Pratt is more circumspect. “I can tell that people are motivated by my transformations, and that feels really good,” says Pratt. “But everyone should know when the movie star stuff is over, I might go back to being the fat guy. My wife wants a pizza oven—she’s going to learn how to bake bread, and I’m going to eat it. I love the health benefits of exercising, and I have a kid now. By exercising, you really can add 20, 30 years to your life. But you gotta live too, so hopefully I’ll find a nice balance.”

PRATT, JARED, AND DAY ALL MET UP IN HAINES City, Florida, for the race. Months of training didn’t prepare Pratt for the chaos of an open-water swim. “I was working a lot harder than I was used to, and only 400 yards in I got a little panicky,” he recalls. Jared, who had started in the same wave, helped guide Pratt to a buoy and then to shore. “It felt great coming out of the water,” says Pratt. “Just getting past the swim was a huge victory.”

Pratt and Jared rode the bike leg together. After a slower-than-expected swim, this part was encouraging. “We must have passed a couple hundred people,” says Pratt, who had enough left in the tank to enjoy the scenery as they rolled by citrus orchards, lake houses, and barbecue joints. “That’s what I love about biking, man,” he says. “You get this intimate understanding of the land. You can hear and smell and taste your surroundings.”

When Pratt and Jared hit the second transition zone, Day was just setting out for his run and said he’d hurt his foot. (X-rays later showed a stress fracture.) Jared and Pratt decided that when they caught up to Day, they’d stay with him rather than chase a faster time. “It was an easy decision,” says Pratt. “I said, ‘I followed Mike here; I’m going to run with him.’”

The warrior toughed it out. “We’d run for 2 miles and then walk for a hundred yards, with Mike limping, and then he’d run again,” says Pratt. “The dude is a machine.” Indeed, thanks to Day’s relentless efforts (and Pratt’s support on social media), more than \$130,000 has been raised for the Brain Treatment Foun-

dation. (To donate, type “Mike Day Crowdrise” into any search engine.)

In the last hour of the race, the conversation turned deeply personal. Day and Jared talked about “the shit they went through” in Iraq, and Pratt shared career war stories. “It’s weird how a race like that makes you bring your guard down,” says Pratt. “You know these guys are tough—they’re the alphas—so to hear Mike talk about how lucky he felt to have his wife and daughters be so supportive of him and how much he loved them was so moving that I told his wife afterward.”

The three men finished the race side by side in just over seven hours. “To shake their hands and hear them tell me I worked my ass off meant everything to me,” says Pratt. “I felt like the luckiest guy alive.” Later that night, the three men celebrated with beer and tequila. “That’s just what the doctor tells you to do,” says Pratt, laughing. “Replenish your fluids with tequila.”

Pratt plans to keep swimming, biking, and running—but with shorter, more intense (and more efficient) workouts. “This training has brought a paradigm shift in my brain about distance,” he says. “Now 3½ miles is a short run.” Then he starts thinking out loud about how he can improve his open-water swimming and how he can build his endurance. Does that mean he wants to do another triathlon? Pratt pauses for a moment. “I’ll definitely do it again. In fact, I want to do a full Ironman,” he says. That’s a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile ride, and 26.2-mile run. Chris Pratt is doubling down on his commitment to fitness. Will you? ■

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Red, White, and You

Are you ambivalently American, or do you rank high on the patriotism meter?

THE
AVERAGE
GUY

2 IN 3

Number of men who own an American flag



59 Percentage of show-offs who own a U.S. flag and actually know the proper way to fold it

37 Percentage of men who proudly proclaim that they're patriots. Damn right!



54 Percentage who say true patriots don't need to broadcast it (unless they play at Gillette Stadium)

52 Percentage of men who'd be fine with putting a woman on the \$20 bill



44 Percentage who have no clue who's currently on every Andrew Jackson

BURGER

All-American food the average guy says isn't the same ordered abroad



43 Percentage of men who say hot dogs are more American than hamburgers—just don't call them frankfurters!



38 Percentage of men who say their ultimate driving machine will always be American made

Car models with the highest percentage of U.S. parts and labor:
Ford F-Series pickup
Buick Enclave
Chevrolet Corvette



BUDWEISER

Macrobrew the average guy is most likely to deem "America's Beer"

55 Percentage of men who know founding father Sam Adams mainly as "that brew dude"



53

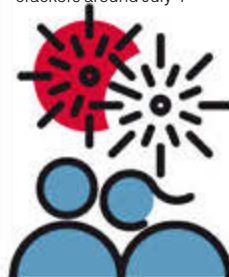
Percentage of baseball fans who mouth the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner"

18

Percentage who are in the stands thinking *Oh say, can we please just play ball?*

4,200

Rough number of guys propelled to the ER by fire-crackers around July 4



54 Percentage of women who say watching fireworks together can lead to romantic sparks

25 Percentage of men who've added their voice to a public protest



Number who think "screw consumerism" and refuse to cross a picket line

"BORN IN THE U.S.A."



No butts about it, the rock song the average guy voted as most patriotic

TAKE A SHOT IN THE DARK

Want to capture an explosive photo? To shoot fireworks, use a digital SLR and go manual, says Alistair Scott, author of *The Greatest Guide to Photography*. Start with the camera in portrait mode on a stable surface. Next, flip off the flash and autofocus, set the shutter speed to "bulb," and keep the ISO low (about 200) to avoid graininess. Now twist your lens to the infinity focus setting (a sideways figure 8), and set the aperture to f/8, tweaking as you shoot to get the right exposure. Press the remote shutter release when the rocket launches; let go when it explodes.

LEARN NEW TRICKS ABOUT OLD GLORY

We spend some \$4 million a year on imported American flags, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Avoid the irony of flying "Made in China" Stars and Stripes by buying your flag at American Legion Flag & Emblem (emblem.legion.org). These are made by Annin Flagmakers, the same 168-year-old American company that sewed the flag hoisted at Iwo Jima. Go for the all-weather option, says Mike Buss, deputy director of the American Legion, and you can overlook the rule about bringing it inside during inclement weather.

Illustrations by GIO PASTORI



To stand, to paddle, to surf a wave.

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